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ALWAYS READY,
OR,
EVERY ONE HIS PRIDE.

A Novel.

By a P. & O.



LONDON :
HALL, VIRTUE, & Co., 25, PATERNOSTER ROW.
SOUTHAMPTON : FORBES & BENNETT, 143, HIGH-ST.

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600052896-

Always Ready,
or,
Every One his Pride.



600052896-

Always Ready,
or,
Every One his Bride.

ALWAYS READY,
OR,
EVERY ONE HIS PRIDE.

A Novel.

By a P. & O.

WE ALWAYS are READY,—steady, boys, steady!
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

Dibdin.

PRIDE, in the power that guards his country's coast,
And all that Englishmen enjoy and boast;
PRIDE, in a life that slander's tongue defied,—
In fact, a *noble passion*, misnamed PRIDE.

Crabbe.

LONDON :
HALL, VIRTUE, & Co., 25, PATERNOSTER ROW.
SOUTHAMPTON : FORBES & BENNETT, 143, HIGH-ST.

1859.

249. C. 376.



INTRODUCTION.

THE Title of a work is generally intended as an indication of the subject on which it is written ; and in the present instance, there has not been any material deviation from this golden rule. " ALWAYS READY " applies itself to the character and prestige of those Services which may be either *permanently* engaged in active or passive demonstration in tending to uphold the dignity of the British Crown ; or *temporarily*, as the exigencies of the State, caused by the interest of conflicting nations, may determine.

The proud distinction of being in the service of their country, ever creates a lively enthusiasm in the breasts of those so engaged, which carries them through danger, privations, and fatigue with courageous hearts, and a steady determination to bring victory and glory to the land of their birth. Moral and physical force, combined, never failed to accomplish this ; and the certainty of its effect, nerves the arm, and steels the heart, against all considerations of self-interest, which otherwise might subdue the flame of inspiration, by which alone great deeds are accomplished, and fresh heroes rise in England's great and glorious cause of liberty and freedom.

" EVERY ONE HIS PRIDE," is not altogether an un-

known adage; and if allowed to exercise its due influence on the mind, must tend to elevate the same. For instance, Pride in the advocacy of truth and justice—Pride in our country's exaltation in the rank of nations, should ensure the admiration and goodwill of all. But to encourage this, ACKNOWLEDGMENT in any form; regardless of intrinsic worth, is the desired and much coveted *prize*.

Although the incidents in the following pages are presented to the reader as a narrative, and under the unusual designation—in the literary world, at least—of a P. and O.; yet it is hoped they will not only serve to amuse, but will also elucidate, in some measure, the sentiments conveyed in this Introduction.

That the title will lead to inquiry, and create an interest in those who have the honour to belong to the MERCANTILE MARINE, we do not doubt; and that it will likewise commend itself to that large portion of the travelling community who are continually crossing the wide seas, in one of the stupendous and magnificent ships which form that vast fleet whose services, when called upon, have drawn forth the encomiums of one of England's greatest Naval Commanders, there cannot be a second opinion.

Take, for instance, a portion only,—those vessels that are owned by a Company which embodies in its resources the elements of eminent success, and claims to rank as one of the richest and most powerful in the world, generally known by the rather singular cognomen, P. and O.: whose ships, sailing under the colours of this

appellation, conveys those we have mentioned safely to their friends and kindred, aye to their sweethearts and wives as well.

The absentee, who resides in England's colonies,—those distant rich possessions,—never sees that unpretending piece of bunting of the P. and O. fluttering in the breeze, but it creates a lively emotion in his breast, reminding him of leaving his native land, for the first time, in his boyish days, bringing back to fond memory the farewell which was uttered so tremulously by that kind and affectionate parent, who was obliged at the time to use every artifice to conceal his heart-felt sorrow and the bitter pang of grief, or the half-broken sob which the loving mother gave vent to as the last good-bye was breathed. Every word, look, and thought, with many other little reminiscences of the time, however trifling, is fondly cherished and treasured up; and years after, the glistening tear, as it stood too ready to burst forth from the eyes of those whom he has ever honoured and loved, will be remembered; nor will that soft pressure of the hand be forgotten, which was received from her who was then no relation to him, but was, notwithstanding, very, very dear. These are not half the thoughts which the sight of a ship belonging to the P. and O. conjures up.

Perhaps the intended bride, she who has never been absent from his mind once since last seen, stimulating him throughout in his arduous duties and wearisome trials, with bright hopes and happy days for the unseen future,—she may be on her way out to join him in life's rug-

ged path, to partake of his troubles and pleasures. Does not the same thought occur to him as it did to those parents who placed her on board :—" Oh, if those who form the crew of that noble ship are only kind to *our* child—his betrothed bride and future wife—what would they—he, not give in return as a recompense for the same, as it is the first time she was about to leave her home—her native land—and be thrown amongst strangers." " Fear not," the great consoler whispers; she is safe with that staid and experienced commander, and the kind-hearted old purser will not forget his promise. He will be as a second father to her, and from those on board she will receive every mark of respect and attention.

Many a brave soldier, who courageously fought the battles of his country, either on the snow-clad plains of the Crimea, the burning sands of Persia, in the sickly jungles of India, or the putrifying, unhealthy, overpopulated towns of China, will remember also, with feelings akin only to affection, the flag under which his first step in life was taken, leading him to honour and to glory; for it was a P. and O. ship that bore him to his *first* battle-field: neither will any little kindness or *hospitality* tendered in the hour of need be soon forgotten. Many of the almost pennyless victims of the Indian mutiny, will also remember, with gratitude, that liberal company who so benevolently took into *consideration* the sad trials that had befallen them, thereby *opening a way* that would carry them back to their peaceful island home.

To one and all of those enumerated who have, to a certain extent, some time or other, placed themselves under a trifling obligation to a P. and O., it could be said,—now it is in *your* power to show the world that you have not a treacherous memory, neither has that cold word ingratitude a resting place in your true English heart, for here is an opportunity given of returning the *quid pro quo*. But, no; your aid, with all due humility be it said, shall not be solicited for our private ends as part payment for that which was, and ever will be, *freely given*. This little tale shall stand boldly forth on its own merits, simply saying,—

“ I am the father of the child tis true,
But its success in life depends on you.”

With regard to those characters which are herein pourtrayed (however indifferently) belonging to the Mercantile Marine Transport Service, likewise to others who may recognise themselves in these pages, and not less to the general reader, we would, to one and all, bid them

“ In the right sense receive the well-meant jest,
And keep the moral still within your breast,
Convinc'd I'd not in heart or tongue offend,—
Your hand acquit me and I've gained my end.”

The appearance of a work edited by a P. and O will possibly excite curiosity amongst some of the reading public, and to those who in their criticisms may think it a little too *erratic*, would beg to remind them that we have borrowed a *wrinkle* from a really kind-hearted,

but wide-awake old purser, who was accustomed, when on duty, to suit his *tone* to the peculiarities of each individual passenger on board, thereby accomplishing that most difficult feat of *pleasing all*. So, in like manner, amongst the numerous and varied scenes herein but roughly sketched, one of the number at least might *take* the fancy, and meet the approbation, of the general reader.

One great advantage our friend, the purser, had over ourselves was, that he used to REHEARSE FOR THE OCCASION, by which he became duly initiated into the peculiarities and secrets of his profession; and although any one may naturally smile at such a ludicrous farce, yet such was absolutely the case, and should any of our readers have the bump of curiosity so strongly developed on their cranium as to wish it described, we will simply state the fact, that the before-mentioned *Dips and Moulds* actually locked himself up in the ladies' saloon of a large steam ship, where there were, as a matter of course, a goodly number of mirrors, so that he could get a full view of his portly figure, which happened unfortunately to be what the French term *embonpoint*, reminding one at once of the marine officer in Dickens's *Pickwick*, whom he most decidedly resembled.

The first part of the play was to throw himself into all sorts of extraordinary attitudes, just like a French dancing master at a young ladies' boarding school teaching his pupils the calisthenic exercises. Having succeeded in doing this part of the performance to his entire satisfaction, the next move was to imagine he was

addressing himself to a very refractory lady passenger, with a brood of young children and a native Ayah, who had just crossed the desert of Egypt. So in order that the reader may have the full advantage of his rehearsal, we will place him on board ship, and let the different individuals answer for themselves, or at least as they did in our friend's vivid imagination.

Imaginary scene or place,—the saloon of a large steam ship at Alexandria, crowded with dusty and fatigued passengers who had just embarked.

Purser (with left hand behind and under coat tail, and a parental look, as it were, at three little children led by the kind but evidently cross-tempered mamma, who, with streams of perspiration oozing down over her care-worn face, was enquiring, in a voice no one could misunderstand,—“Where is the Purser?”)

“Here he is, mem. I have the honour of holding that position on board this magnificent vessel. Can I do anything for you, mem., in order to make you *more* comfortable?” [He here makes a most polite bow, raising his cap with right hand, and draws the right foot back into a kind of scrape, his face, meanwhile, beaming with a most gracious smile.]

Lady (much excited, but delighted at finding some one at last to vent her spleen upon)—“Well, Mis-ter Purser, I only want to tell you *this*,—I have been in many ships, but never,—no *never* have I been treated so badly before, after paying so much money too.”

Purser (drawing a very long face, and hurriedly snatching a roll of paper out of his coat pocket, which

is supposed to be the ship's passenger list, runs his fore finger down the different names till he comes to one of *title*, when it stops suddenly)—“ I believe I have the honour of addressing Lady Bonhomme ? ”

Lady (much pacified and pleased at being taken for a lady of *title*)—“ No: I'm not Lady Bonhomme ; I am Mrs. Deputy Commissioner Cowryprig.”

Purser (again raises his cap and scrapes the right foot at the *very* sound of such an illustrious name, his face at that moment beaming with good-natured-*ness* and o-bliging-*ness*)—“ Oh !—ah !—of course ; four children and one native Ayah. How stupid I am to be sure. What can I do for you, Missus Deputy-Commissioner Cowryprig ? ” Your cabin, I see, is number forty-four, mem ; one of the best, in fact the *very* best cabin in this noble ship, I do assure you, mem.”

Lady (interrupts rather impatiently)—“ It is not about myself that I care but the children and Ayah : *where* will you put *them* ? ” [Here she comes to a dead stop and looks hard at her man, as much as to say, Now be careful how you answer me !]

Purser (commences, stroking down the hair of one of the young urchins, carefully avoiding the eyes of his tormentor, and is so much taken up with the *dear* children, that the question is obliged to be repeated before it is taken notice of, when, as a matter of course, it loses half its weight, when, he heaves a deep sigh, and says, with the most tender pathos)—“ Excuse me, Missus Deputy-Commissioner Cowryprig, for not answering your question before, but your little son here reminds me so

much of one of mine at home,—such a fine handsome boy. But, ah! about the children and Ayah, mem. The *very* thing I wanted to speak about.” [He now puts on quite a business-like look, and eyes the lady full in the face.] “In fact I’ve been looking all over the ship for you this last half hour, mem.”

Lady (getting fidgetty tries to bring him to the *point*)
“Yes: but about the children and Ayah?”

Purser (blandly, as it were, rubbing his hands as if it was coming *now*)—“Yes, the Ayah and children, or rather the children and Ayah. I stand corrected. We are all apt to make mistakes, Missus Deputy-Commissioner Cowryprig. You must know, the company I have the honour, and, I will say, pleasure, to serve, thrust aside *every* consideration in order to obtain the comfort of their numerous passengers; and although, necessarily, certain rules and regulations are drawn up for the safety, and, I may say, well being of those on board, yet”—(as he was taking a long breath, in continuation, he was again interrupted).

Lady (impatiently, having heard casually from one of the stewards that the dinner bugle would sound in about a quarter of an hour, and that they were very punctual)
—“But the children and Ayah?”

Purser (inwardly in high glee with himself at seeing three *cross-grained* yellow-faced old East-India colonels, who had been waiting with the intention of having a good *growl*, make their exit for the purpose of dressing for dinner, in consequence of hearing what the steward *said*)—“The very thing I was driving at, Missus Deputy-

Commissioner Cowryprig. Let me see, I left off about the rules and regulations. Yes: although it's against them, I'll take the responsibility on my own shoulders, and place you *altogether* in number forty-four. The Ayah can sleep on the *floor*, and will be close at hand at a minute's notice should she be wanted; the only duty left for me now is, to caution your *dear* little children not to tumble out of the berths when the ship rolls,—they are *only* about five feet high." [He here kisses the dear little baby in long clothes, and looks very funny at the Ayah.]

Lady (feeling considerably better, being quite overpowered and taken off her guard by the purser's extreme kindness and great forbearance, inquires in a subdued voice)—"About the milk, Mis-ter Purser? and I hope there is a surgeon attached to *this no-b-l-e* ship, as my little girl's cutting her teeth."

Purser (drawing himself up to his full height, rejoiced, as it were at having got over the first question so easily, and looks *now* as if he would answer *any* other)—"About the milk and the surgeon, mem.: I am happy to say—in fact delighted at the opportunity I have of saying, we carry an *experienced* cow and a *good* surgeon, Missus Deputy-Commissioner Cowryprig. The former has been many voyages with us, and can be *depended* upon; the latter is a little *stout*, but quite a family man, mem., and never asks for *fees*, being remunerated by the company, mem., consequently don't require any, in fact wouldn't *accept* of it."

[Here he inwardly chuckled to himself as this latter

first-rate idea came into his head of serving *Pills* out, if he ordered champagne as medical comforts for the young ladies in order to cure them from sea sickness, so that it would increase his expenditure, but at that particular moment he remembered having put the cart before the horse, with regard to the experienced cow, &c., but consoled himself at knowing that the editor of a Bombay newspaper did the same thing a short time since in one of his ship advertisements.* At this precise moment the bugle was supposed to sound off for dinner, at which he makes another polite bow, and lady, with family, also make their exit in great haste, having forgotten to secure a place at the dinner table by depositing her card in a plate, but not before the eldest boy, who has just been taken out of the *jungle*, and consequently don't know a word of his mother tongue, gives our friend a kick on the shins, and at the same time calls him by the distinguished and Hindostanee appellation "poggell."

Purser (laughing and in high glee, rubbing his hands) — "Playful little fellow; dear me, *isn't* he fond of play." [Aside to steward,—"Take that wild devil out of *this*."]

Having gone through this part of the rehearsal satisfactorily, he was obliged to stop, and wipe the perspiration from his forehead with his pocket-handkerchief, drink a glass of ale, and take a long breath previous to his further movements. The only remaining part left for him now was to practise a few choice sentences, suiting the expression of his countenance to the same,

* A fact.

uttering such words as "Certainly, Missus Deputy-Commissioner Cowryprig"—"Most decidedly," in such a pleasing tone, and with such a kind look, as if the fortunate passengers were having their own way in everything, making them think *he* was the most obliging and kind-hearted purser that had ever put his name to a portage bill. And even now, at the moment we write this, has so much improved from the effects of those rehearsals, combined with constant practice, that the *most* celebrated ventriloquist might almost envy his success, in being able to adapt his voice to the different sounds most suitable to his professional circumstances. The closing act was to open the door, make one of his most polite bows, and his exit,—the drop scene was supposed to be let down, for he had finished; and whilst he retires we *will* draw aside the curtain, and enter upon our stage "the world,"—*in propria personâ* give one of *our* scrapes, and, with due humility, ask our audience to bear in mind what Mr. D. O'Connell's counsel, in his closing address to the jury, *urged* upon *them*, viz., "to temper justice with mercy, for *veritatis simplex oratio est*."

After this introduction, we will ask him or her, as the case may be, to paint in their own imagination our opening scene.

CHAPTER I.

A FARM HOUSE, situated in a parish which, from various reasons, shall be nameless, but in a county generally called the *Garden of England*—in other words, “sweet Devonshire.”

This said habitation did not resemble any of those disorderly, dirty looking places, which prevail to a great extent in our favoured isle at the present time, where one's eyes encounter nothing but manure heaps, cow houses, stables, and pig sties, thrown all higgledy-piggledy together, at sixes and sevens, without any degree of architectural form or shape, but was the very reverse; as the necessary out-houses, so requisite to the yeoman, had been carefully placed in the background, completely hid from the parlour view, although the whole was fully commanded from the kitchen window.

In front ranged a beautiful garden, about two hundred yards long and fifty wide; and the wall on each side which formed its boundary, was at least fifteen feet high, supporting along its whole length a magnificent assortment of fruit trees, which brought forth earlier than any in the surrounding neighbourhood.

From the principal entrance, or, what is designated in that part of the country, “the best door,” was a nice white gravel walk, on each side of which might be seen growing the choicest flowers of the season. This little earthly paradise had a look of neatness, combined with cleanliness, which would assure a spectator that one of the inmates, at least, took a pride in botanical pursuits.

The gravel walk led to a small garden gate, which looked like the identical one belonging to that old song or ballad, which the poor people in that part were so fond of singing, about a certain "lovesick damsel waiting a long, long time for her lover;" and when she had almost despaired of seeing him, and determined, in consequence, on giving him the cold shoulder, he appeared at the garden gate, and oh, luck! he found it so easy to excuse himself,—he had been a great distance to buy a certain ring, which most young ladies are fond of.

But we are digressing from our story. In addition to all those pretty things which have been before mentioned, and nowhere to be found but in happy England, was a row of tall poplar trees, equidistant from each other, ranging along both sides of the gate, and facing the house. Many, we have not the least doubt, have made up their minds that it was quite complete, and nothing was required to make it more seductive; but ask the young girl, of sweet sixteen, just come from boarding school, where she had been reading the last fashionable novel, whether she thinks so or not, and we would wager a white hat,—if it was not too common,—that she would call you a "donkey," or, if not friendly enough with you, would smother the expression and only think you one; "because," she would say, "there is no pretty bower or white flag-staff there."

Well, to satisfy our young beauty, we will tell her those two necessary appendages *were there*.

Oh! if some of those good and kind-hearted mothers, who have a numerous family of marriagable daughters, were only to know of what service those bowers were, we are sure they would have them constructed at any price; for woe be to the old bachelor who finds himself accidentally seated down in one of them, with a lovely young

girl by his side, if he doesn't talk all sorts of nonsense, and say things that, in his calmer moments, he would never have dreamt of. We'll forgive him.

We once heard two of those old dowagers carrying on a very lively conversation on the subject in one of our Indian ports,—it was Calcutta, or, as some call it, “The City of Palaces.” One was asking the other how it was she had managed to get her daughter off her hands so well, and “settled in life?” The answer was, “Oh, it required a little diplomacy;” she had tried several plans, such as making “Juliana Phœbiana Clementina” cast up her eyes and look at young “Jerry” when she came to a particular and sentimental part of the song she was singing, closing her beautiful eyelashes and blushing, accompanied with a soft “yes” when she was asked by the aforesaid young gentleman to dance the next valse. But what never failed, under the most untoward circumstances, was making up one of those *marry-my-daughter* parties or “pic-nics” to the botanical gardens;—what with going down the river “Hoogly”—or what is generally known by the name of “Garden Reach,”—to it, in one of those green, native pleasure boats, which are covered over with Cochin matting, a kind of “gondola” affair; the luncheon or “tiffin,” as they call it in Hindostanee, at the pavilion; the “stroll” around the magnificent gardens, looking at the beautiful water tanks, with the water lillies floating gracefully on the surface; taking shelter together, from the burning hot sun, under a banyan tree (which tree, let us tell our readers aside, could shelter a whole regiment of soldiers under its wide-spreading boughs); and, as a *coup de grace*, a jolly good dinner *a la fourchette*, with lots of champagne, mixed up with toasts of various kinds, of which your victim, of course, plays a conspicuous part; a good dance

on the green plot in front of the landing place, after which, if he doesn't propose before he gets home, he must be either too tipsy, or a "ninney" not worth having.

"You may depend on it," said the good dame, with a significant toss of the head, "it only requires a little manœuvring."

However, as it is not our intention, at present to follow these kind-hearted creatures in their discourse how to kidnap poor old bachelors, we will proceed with our story.

This tiny gate opened out to a white pebbly beach, washed by the beautiful river Tamar, which flowed past so serenely and majestically, as if fully aware of the lovely scenery it commands; and the description given in Cyrus Redding's *Itinerary of Cornwall* is not at all exaggerated, in which he says,—

"Glancing up the Tamar itself, towards Hall's Hole, having on the right the small creek of Liphill, the river, if possible, increases in beauty. Over the mainlands on the north, towards Beer Alston, the tors of Dartmoor, beyond Tavistock, rise in darkly-grey undulations against the azure of the sky. The glance cast down the Cornwall shore discovers hills, fields, and woods, thrown back in an amphitheatrical form. The river here, viewed at high water, when it presents an expanse of above a mile wide, and an unbroken reach of between four and five, is enchanting. Delicious are the rural nooks upon the shores; and while the scenery is ever disclosing fresh beauties in wood, hill, pasture, rock, and stream, the mind is kept alive, and the fancy perpetually employed in anticipation. Here the waves sparkle, every dash of the oar raising a sensible freshness, and diffusing flashes of light from the reflecting crystal;—there the water seems to sleep in a tranquility like that of the blessed,—green coloured

from the reflected herbage, the very '*rio verde*,'—the 'green water,'—of the Spanish ballad."

"*Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.*"

This is our first scene. Well might our kind-hearted and justly popular Queen, (God bless her,) who takes a pleasure trip on it occasionally, in the little steam-yacht "Fairy," call it the "Rhine of England." How far it merits that name, we will leave others to judge; but this much we will say, it is a lovely river, and runs so serpentine, just for all the world as if the thirty-two points of the compass were quarrelling with each other which way it should twine itself. On both sides of it were gardens bearing the most delicious fruits. A little to the northward it took a short bend, and turned directly round the opposite way. In this bend was to be seen a silver lead mine. And under the bed of the river, the hard-working miner laboured in a deep shaft, adit, or level, for a small pittance, when his masters (generally London adventurers) were reaping a rich harvest from the valuable ore that was brought to the surface by that persevering and enterprising class of men. Little do they think, whilst sitting in their beautifully furnished rooms in Town, with every luxury around them which this modern world of ours can afford, about these poor fellows, buried several hundred fathoms in the bowels of earth, toiling hard and breathing foul air, what hardships they undergo;—how that every minute, down in that cold gravelike spot, passes for two, and that they are in danger of the river breaking in upon them. No one dare touch that glittering silver ore any more in that adit, although it looks so temptingly. The miner gives a longing look towards it, heaves a sigh, drops his pick axe, and thinks of those in his pretty little homely cot-

tage on the brow of yon hill. The slightest touch might be the means of making them miserable and desolate.

To the southward, about four miles, it takes a straight course, then a slight curve, and disappears from view altogether. On the opposite side, and at the very extreme, the little village of Car——n, with its clean white chimneys, showed itself; and on the quay were to be seen several people,—evidently farmers, with their wives and buxom daughters,—walking about, as if they were waiting for something, when, lo and behold! a small steamer came puffing and splashing round the corner, steamed alongside the quay, and discharged a part of her burden, mostly fruit women, who had been to Plymouth market, and, having got rid of their produce, had returned with the money, and empty panniers or baskets.

Many were the enquiries made, as to how the market went? What news from the seat of war, “Sevastopol?” And who came up in the steamer?

The two first questions were answered at once. “The market had been flat;” “And things in general looked gloomy in the Crimea.” But with regard to the last question they seemed puzzled, when one at length said, “A stranger was on board,—a gentleman, about eight and twenty,—who looked sick, and was very lame. They all thought he had been wounded at the wars. They were all sure he was a gentleman, as he had been kind to the little children on board, and given them some coppers to buy sweetmeats with.” All appeared sorry he did not come on shore, as they would have given him the best cup of “tay” that they had in the house.

In the midst of this little bustle the steamer shoved off, and was rapidly nearing the Farm House, the exterior of which has been described. The stranger alluded to was, in reality, not one; for the scenery around looked

homely in the extreme to him, and most of the faces on board were well known. But for reasons best known to himself, he did not feel inclined to gratify their curiosity. Had he only mentioned his name, they would have recognised him at once, and carried their catechism perhaps a little too far, by asking him "his circumstances;" "what brought him home?" "did he intend staying long?" and numerous other questions, which the poor people in the west think they have a *right* to ask,—more from *habit* than impertinence. Still it is their way.

As the little steamer proceeded onwards, the stranger noticed all the various places with much interest. And on looking at those familiar faces around him, could not help thinking to himself,—“How strange! Here am I at home, and perfectly unknown; but yet I know them, and could call each one by name. They are not altered,—it is I that must be altered. Well, well! I suppose it can't be helped. Ah! there's dear old Cleveland looking the same as ever.”

In another minute or two he had arrived at Hall's Hole, where he disembarked; and, with the reader's consent, there we will leave him for a time, and close this our first chapter.

CHAPTER II.

Now, although the exterior of the model Farm House has been described,—which, for convenience sake, shall be called Cleveland,—not a word has been said about the interior or of its inmates. With regard to the former, let it be understood that it was not by any means an

edifice resembling the mansion of the opulent, but one of the more modest—but not less comfortable—abodes of middle-class life.

Upstairs it had its necessary quantum of bed rooms, sufficiently numerous, after it had accommodated those residing there, to allow of a SPARE ROOM being set aside for the visitor. Below and in front were two parlours, called respectively the first and second, divided by a passage, and leading to the good old-fashioned kitchen, with its very old ancient looking clock and SETTLE. Behind the latter were the sculleries, cellars, and the well lighted-up dairy; for due care had been taken, when this cold room was built, to take advantage of the then existing law, which allowed this domicile to have a WINDOW without being TAXED. So the most had been made of the privilege, for it was a large one.

Now for its inmates. Seated in the second parlour were two grown-up people: one a stout-built young man about thirty years of age, and a young lady, very likely not far from four and twenty. We won't be positive. It is so difficult and unmannerly guessing ladies' ages. We dare say our young beauty that we mentioned before, will utter impatiently, "Confound the fellow, why don't he say they were man and wife at once, and have done with it." Had it been so, we should have brought our pen to a dead stop; but it was not. Those two were a brother and sister. And never, we believe, did those so near relatives agree with each other better than did Ned and Jane Middleton. They appeared to think and know,—a kind of instinct, if we might use the term—that they could not do without each other; that fate determined they should live together.

Their father had been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, as the saying is,—consequently did not value

that which he had no trouble to get. And by the time he had married and got seven children, he became a perfect bankrupt, his only failing being a great deal too good natured and careless. His wife, with whom he lived very happily, used to chide him occasionally, but loved him too well to be continually nagging at him, as some ladies are in the habit of doing. He promised her over and over again to be more careful and less thoughtless; when, one unlucky year, everything being very dull, as it will happen sometimes, things took a wrong turn. He was obliged to borrow money, and paid an enormous interest to some unscrupulous and long-headed lawyer (which even Devonshire is infested with), unknown to those that were near and dear to him; and, as a matter of course, the danger was not avoided, but delayed a little time, as it were, only to make it doubly sure. When it did come, he, poor fellow, knew himself to be a ruined man. But how could he break it to his dear, kind wife, who had always cautioned him gently and lovingly to be more careful.

He now found when too late, as many others are too apt to do, what a mistake he had made. Suffice it to say, the crash did come; and he, poor man, was crushed to the earth. But instead of, as he expected to hear, nothing but reproaches from his wife and family, they all appeared glad for it.

The wife and mother thought only how she could reconcile him to his ill luck and misfortune, whom she had sworn before the altar to cherish and love through life.

Even the eldest son,—a fine strapping lad about eighteen years old, who had enjoyed every comfort, and been petted, as generally the eldest and youngest are,—thought himself a foot taller as he came up to his father,

grasped the old man's hand, and said, smiling in his face,—“Never mind, father; cheer up. We shall see better days yet. I am glad this has occurred. It will give me an opportunity of being what I wished,—a farmer. And I will have such a nice farm; for you know—

‘I can reap, I can mow,
I can plough, and I can sow;’

and the world is wide before me.” The fond mother gave her own boy a look—her first-born—as her eyes were bedewed with tears, which repaid him tenfold for what he had said. As she succeeded in getting her unlucky partner to retire for the night, she held a council of war, as it were, in the little parlour, where they had spent so many happy days. And, poor soul! as she glanced up at two full-length portraits that were hung up in the most conspicuous place, how she remembered the day when they were brought home! It was the day her first-born was christened. There had been a gay party, and every one said what a handsome pair they were, and what a correct likeness it was. And then the old nurse, dressed off so smart, with the healthy chubby little urchin in her arms, how she thought it was her turn to speak out, and say something. After which everybody roared with laughter; for she said the youngster was exactly like them, or, as she expressed herself, “Fayther’s eyes and mother’s nose, the young rogue had.”

Didn’t the young country girls (the fond mother’s former schoolmates) giggle again, and say to each other, in a whisper loud enough for all the young fellows to hear,—“How that they wouldn’t be married for anything—no, not they.” But when alone to themselves afterwards, they one and all agreed, without one dis-

sentient voice, "that they did not think marriage was a bad thing after all." In this, strange to say, they were quite unanimous.

In a corner of the room was a "baze vial." And although it may appear strange in our present time, yet, in those days, every country squire used to play that instrument on a Sunday at church. And he had never failed to do so, as he was always considered a good musician, and felt very proud of it. At Christmas Eve, when the carol singers came round,—a company of about a dozen rustics of both sexes,—they would never begin without the "mayster," as they called him, joined them. They knew they were sure of a hearty welcome; lots of Devonshire cider and Christmas cake; with a glass of hot gin and water, at the least, to keep the cold out. Many were the good jokes that passed about their sweethearts, attended with shouts of laughter; for on those occasions every one assembled in the good old country kitchen, and around a broiling hot hearthen fire, for they had the Christmas meat in. All were happy, and strove to make each other more so, if possible.

It was, as we before said, very trying when these things caught her eye, and those thoughts we have but faintly described, passed rapidly through her mind,—much quicker than they can be transmitted to paper, and, as she thought, how that all of them were finished with now, heaved a deep and bitter sigh, which told of but one half of that poor woman's grief; and in a low mournful voice said,—“My dear children, are you all here?” A general murmur of “Yes, mother dear,” was the answer. She then described to them all what had occurred, but not saying it was the fault of their father, but that he had been very, very unfortunate, and was

much to be pitied; and that they must all be kinder to him than ever.

"As for you John," turning to her eldest son, "you must take farm next term and rent it. I heard it was to be let yesterday. You shall go and take it yourself to-morrow morning. Your father, Bessy, and I will live with you." And taking up a handsome little girl, about seven years of age, she kissed her affectionately, and told her she must do without her dolly and playthings now, for she must try and be a woman, and help to keep house for her brother; but of all things she must try and be good, and love her brother. At which the affectionate little creature burst out crying and sobbing, went over to where her brother stood with uplifted hands and face, saying, "Dear brother John, I have always tried to love you, but you won't let me." At which the youth turned red and white alternately; but the struggle did not last long.

He embraced his dear little sister for the *first time*, whilst tears came running down his manly cheeks. For, be it known, he had always looked upon that little innocent child as one that had come into the world without any right; simply because his father and mother had given up all thought of having any more,—it being upwards of five years or more since the last was born. And he had been in the habit, young as he was, of calculating what his father was worth, and divide it by six, to know what his portion would be. So that when the seventh made its appearance, he found his share would be less; and consequently the dislike, which had at last come to an end, for the very good reason that there was nothing now to divide. And if the truth was known, perhaps that little thing commonly called conscience, had told him how haughty and unjustly he had

behaved towards a poor little unoffending child,—the same flesh and blood as himself.

Oh! ye that are similarly situated, have courage, and throw off that false pride and selfishness. Think you not your prayer would be more acceptable at the throne of mercy? Most assuredly it would. And when at night laying down on your pillow, you would not have that green-eyed monster, conscience, pricking you. Forgive us for dwelling on this so long, but it only shows adversity at times does us good; and we have always imagined that God Almighty, in his infinite goodness and mercy, has thought proper to send it to us for the purpose of purifying us, which it certainly does.

Now, whilst these two were embracing each other, making up for lost time, there were a couple in that little family group that looked anything but pleased. Not that they grieved so much about their father's loss; but simply because they thought themselves slighted, in not being taken notice of. One was the second son, whose name was Edward,—a lad about seventeen years old; and the next to him a young girl, a year or two younger, who had just come home from boarding school, where she had been for a short time finishing off her education. We do not mention this last incident as being in her favour,—far from it, and on the contrary; for we have had a great dislike to one of those schools, ever since an old gentleman we met with in the far east—one of those affectionate papas—having intimated to us in very strong terms,—rather too strong, we thought, at the time,—that his daughter, Amelia, was the handsomest, most accomplished, kindest, and best of her sex, and that he was happy to say she had been brought up at home, under his own personal superintendence, and not at one of those boarding schools, where alone they

acquire the *requisites* of a *flirt*. Mind, these are the exact words. We have them by us at present in black and white, beautifully framed.

To continue. The young girl's name was Jane. Her brother was a fine, strong built lad, not quite so tall as the elder, but much more muscular. In addition to a naturally good temper and light spirits, he had a fine strong mind of his own. Indeed, if he took anything in his head, difficult to do, he neither looked to the right or to the left till it was done. That primness in later years was of much use to him. However, of that anon.

The sister Jane, or Jenny as she was generally called, was a remarkable fine grown girl, or, as some of our popular novelists would say, her limbs were just as if she had been cast in nature's finest mould. We will not attempt to describe her face, but cannot resist the temptation of saying a word about her optical organs. Such eyes had she. We confess ourselves, although we have seen a few summers, we have never met their equal. Yet whenever you caught them you always felt inclined to laugh; and no matter whatever mood one was in at the time, there was that to be seen in those clear bright twinkling orbs, that made you happy and comfortable with all mankind. Such a mixture of fun, with good nature, that sparkled out of them.

All those things, as an old lady once told us, was only outward show, and that beauty was but skin deep; but in this case we will not hesitate in saying it went deeper, for she was the most kind-hearted, unselfish creature that ever breathed. If she were ever to tread accidentally on a worm, she would grieve over it for a day or two afterwards. Many were the favours the poor people received from Miss Jane, as they called her. If any were sick, she would take the trouble to walk a good distance,

and carry them some nourishment, either some beef tea or perhaps a little port wine. And many were the "God bless you, Miss Jane!" she received, whilst perhaps nursing the baby in her arms, or romping with the elder children, for they all liked her; and, indeed, they used to look forward for her visit as grown-up people do for some holyday or other.

These two, as we said before, looked anything but pleased. The quick eye of the mother soon noticed it, and, fixing hers on them, said, "Come, Ned and Jenny, don't look so *glumpy*. Your part of the play is made up too. Next week you shall both go down to Cleveland, and stop with your uncle Edward," who, by the bye, should be stated, was an old bachelor, who had quite sufficient property of his own to live on, but rented this farm for the sake of keeping his mind employed, and, although he had several times asked his sister to allow two of her children to reside with him,—one to undertake the duties of the house, and the other to keep him company when he went out shooting, rabbiting, or fishing, or, better still, to look after the farm when he was absent; yet it was always refused. For, mother like, she loved them too well herself to be separated, even for ever so short a time. But in a case like the present she knew it was for their good, and could not be helped.

So the council being over, she kissed them all round, bid them go to their beds, and kneel down and pray to God to protect and bless them; for they had been brought up in the fear of Him who made all things. So they all scrambled off to their respective rooms, strange to say, in much better spirits than they had for some time. Even little Bessy, who had her dear little hand clasped in that of her brother's as they were leaving the parlour, lisped out, that she was so glad father had been

so unfortunate, as she could love and kiss her brother now.

The bond of friendship that was made then between the different brothers and sisters, was never forgotten ; and time has only tended to cement it stronger, and more durable, if possible.

To make a long story short, a month after the whole family had separated. If any one had told them twelve months before that such would be the case, they never would have believed it. Even their very neighbours shook their heads very sagely, and said to each other,—“ Who'd have thought it.”

But there are three of the family we have not mentioned now,—two boys, William and David, who were in some way connected with a large commercial firm not far from St. Paul's Churchyard in London ; and a daughter, called Mary, who had married pretty well. So these three being cared for, as it were, we will let them, with the remainder of the family, fight their own battles for a few years.

CHAPTER III.

WE will now turn to the two that we left in the parlour—Ned Middleton and his sister Jenny. Neither broke silence until the little vessel came opposite their house, when Ned said, taking down a long telescope, and looking at the object they appeared so interested in—“ We shall soon know if Harry is come home, as he will be sure to pay me a visit first.”

“ I should think he would,” was the quaint answer.

Then, finishing her sentence hesitatingly—"You were always great friends with each other?"

To which her brother replied, looking at her archly, "Yes, we were; and you appeared to have your share of it too."

Jenny blushed scarlet, and for the purpose of hiding it, ran out in a hurry, as if she had forgotten something that required doing in her household duties (for we have done what we promised in our last chapter—passed over a few years)—and at that time she was keeping house for her brother. The kind old uncle had died some years before, and what astonished everybody was, that he left them the house, furnished, it was true, but not a farthing of money, and the farm but slightly stocked.

Poor Ned! he had a hard beginning of it. What with tithe, taxes, and rent, he had to fight a hard battle for the first two or three years; but, as we said before, he had firmness of mind, and looked everything in the face, grasped it at once, and at that time had surmounted all difficulties (although no particular luck had attended him in the way of fruit-bearing), much to the astonishment and annoyance of a few of his neighbours, who had prophesied that his pride would soon be brought down, simply because they envied him, and were annoyed because he would not ask any favours.

Jenny had flown up-stairs to the looking-glass, and having put aside a small, wicked, sly-looking curl, that would come straying down over her lovely white neck, as if on purpose to show what a contrast there was, she gave a sly nod at herself in the glass, as much as to say, "I'll do for him now;" after which she turned, and on looking out of the window into the garden beneath, espied a beaver hat over the wall, under-cliff, but moving very slowly. Just as she was beginning to think it could

not be any one she expected, her brother was heard to bawl out, "There he comes, sure enough; I thought he wouldn't pass me; on my word, I'll be glad to shake the old chap by the hand:" at the next moment, both brother and sister were going down the gravel walk together.

Now, Jenny, although she was possessed of those good qualities we have mentioned before, still she was not without her faults. But they were very few indeed: the one we are about to mention being, that she was fond of a little revenge—(who of us is not?)—and, consequently, had made up her mind for some time to do the haughty to her cousin Harry. She had planned it so nicely, she would be so distant, and call him "Mister," and all the time appear as cool as a cucumber: this was because he had not written her of late, which made her think he was unkind.

But, poor fellow! he had been up the Crimea, or (properly speaking) the Black Sea, in the transport service—naval, not land—and, consequently, had quite enough to do without writing letters, though it was to a favourite cousin.

But an exclamation of pity and bewilderment escaped both, as the stranger—or cousin Harry, as we have been pleased to call him—came suddenly in sight at the front gate; for instead of seeing a fine, dashing young man, in the best of health and spirits, as our young beauty would most likely expect—we are afraid we shall be obliged to disappoint her again, and we cannot promise it to be the last time—the individual in question was quite the reverse.

He was a man about eight or nine and twenty, rather tall, about five feet eleven, a very dark complexion, showing that he had passed many years of his life in a foreign land, under a tropical sun; he had dark hair, and large,

jet black, bushy whiskers, which contrasted very much with, and set off to advantage, a beautiful row of teeth, white as ivory—for they were kept extremely clean, and their owner appeared to know their value, for whenever he smiled he took very good care to show them.

In this, he copied many of our ladies of the present day; for go you into the streets of any town, and particularly at any of our fashionable watering places, and if you wish to see a pretty foot, take notice of the first young lady that passes, who holds her dress pretty high—of course to keep it clean—and you will be sure to see such dear little peepers, most likely enveloped in a nice-fitting boot, with high military heels, *à la Eugénie*. Or if you are passing an evening at a friend's house, and the young lady, the occupant there, challenges you to a game of chess, depend on it she always wears kid gloves—Dent's, of course—and when she takes the first move, which is to take the aforesaid gloves off, you are check-mated before the game commences—that is, if you are an old bachelor.

To finish the portrait, he was dressed in plain clothes, but their appearance would have ruined any respectable tailor, the coat suiting him like a sentry box, fitting him all round and touching nowhere. But he had suffered so much from over-exertion, climate, and disease, whilst in the Crimea, that he was but a skeleton of his former self. In his hand was a stick; not one of your neat, trim, cracking kind of things, mounted with gold, which would break at the slightest touch, and made originally for sale; but a good, stout, strong one, that would either support its possessor in helping him along, or (if needs be) give a runaway thief a settler on the head. It had, naturally, a large knob on the end; it was called a "Pe-

nang lawyer," which he had cut himself when at the Prince of Wales' Island, and so valued it accordingly.

Jenny was the first to open the gate, and forgetting all her strong resolutions to the contrary, could not, on seeing her poor cousin looking so ill and emaciated, resist the temptation of giving him a cordial reception, and in the same breath, asking a multiplicity of questions—"What was the matter? had he met with any accident coming up the river?" after which, she blushed very much, and appeared almost ashamed of her great vehemence.

Whilst she was doing this, Ned had, farmer-like, got hold of both his hands, and was shaking and squeezing them as hard as he could, just as if he thought that was the best cure for all complaints. This, as any one might naturally imagine, took away the invalid's breath; but when he did recover, he smiled sickly at both of them, and said he had been overworked and exposed to the climate up in the Black Sea; but it was not much, only an old attack of liver complaint he had picked up in India. "But," continued he, "the worst part of it is, I have great difficulty in walking, having met with an accident, and sprained my knee by a kick from a cavalry horse, whilst helping to take across Omer Pacha's army from Bourgas to Eupatoria; but with my old friend here," holding up his stick, which they had seen before, "and an elastic band, I can keep out of Greenwich yet, and (as you perceive) crawl up as far as Cleveland," at the same time giving the young lady a sly look, which made Jenny, notwithstanding her attempt to the contrary, look remarkably well pleased; and although she managed to close her lips, and make up a curious-looking *pouch*, her eyes belied her, as she said, "Why, Harry, you ought to have brought a certain young lady

from Plymouth up with you, to help you along," there was a general laugh. He muttered out, that "he couldn't think of making a walking stick of any young lady.

To have seen these three going up that lovely garden, on a beautiful summer's evening, any stranger would have said that they were happy indeed; but as she had got hold of his arm, helping him along, fearing lest any little pebble would trip him up, and watching him as she would a helpless child, she could not help thinking what a contrast there was in how she *intended* to have treated him, and how she actually did; but something said to her, he is sick and weak, and requires much care and nursing; and so she eased her conscience that way. When they reached the door, Jenny made her escape, and left her brother and cousin together, for the intended superintending the making of the tea herself that evening, much to the surprise and wonder of the healthy buxom servant maidens, who winked at each other very knowingly; but Jenny was too busy with her own thoughts to observe them.

"Welcome, my boy, to Cleveland, once more," exclaimed Ned. "I can assure you, we have not forgotten you in your absence; we have often recalled to mind your cheerful jolly laugh, and amusing yarns, as you call them, of a sailor's life, that you have told us, by our fire-side, of a cold winter's evening; and I hope you have more of them in store.

"Well, to tell you the truth, Ned, I have seen and heard a little of this war at Sebastopol, it is true; but I must confess at once, I have not had the honour and glory, as they call it, of participating in it, as I have not so much as fired a shot, for the simple reason, as it happened, I wasn't required; so I resign all claim to being thought one of those heroes that we read so much of now-a-days;

for you must know, I have not been in her Majesty's service, but in what is called the "Mercantile Marine;" and in that service, or employ, or whatever you give it—for we are not particular—they are only required to do the drudgery part, and all they care about is satisfying their own conscience in doing a certain duty they are ordered to perform, well and cheerfully, 'for the dear old country's sake;' as for reward, all that they give a thought about is hearing the admiral say he is well pleased with their services, which Lord Lyons repeatedly did, and when they arrive home, their owners or employers thank them for taking care of their property, and doing their duty towards their fatherland; at the same time, kindly give them leave to go down in the country for a short time, to recruit their health. But we will have a talk about this another time, for I've had enough of it lately, and require quietness, with a little nursing; and I think I have come to the right spot for it. By the bye, Ned, how homely your place looks to me! There is the old flagstaff, bower, and everything just the same as I left it last. Why, I declare there is my little shrub that I planted, looking the greenest and healthiest in the garden."

At this last remark Ned burst out laughing, and was about to say something, which we will leave our young beauty to guess, or any one else that feels so inclined, when a nice little hand, with a well-turned wrist, was thrust up before his mouth. It was his sister Jenny's, who told him "not to make a muff of himself," at the same time announcing that tea was ready.

So, with the readers' consent, we will accompany them into the second parlour; for they knew their guest would not like to be made a stranger of, which he certainly would if tea had been laid in the first, or best one.

Now, this identical parlour had the same paper, and the very same furniture, that it had years before; and although the inmates died off one by one, as old Father Time overtook them, it remained just the same; and the only thing any one could say of it was, that it looked old-fashioned, and a little bit out of date.

There was the large old weather-glass hung up, with its face looking as brazen as ever. The only appearance about it which told tales was the marks on it: for instance, "Stormy" was looking a little pale, as if it was ashamed to be seen; "Changeable" appeared to have been the greatest sufferer; but "Fair" looked as fresh as ever, and came out in bold relief and contrast to the other two. Many had been the mow of corn and rick of hay that had been cut and dried under its guidance. It had been a great favourite with every one in the house; and, in fact, they looked upon it as almost supernatural.

Next, hung up in the post of honour, which we are sure every one will agree with us in allowing that "so it ought to be," were two portraits of our most gracious Queen. One was taken before she ascended the throne, and the other was as she appeared seated on it, with the crown on her well-shaped head, and the sceptre in her right hand. Ned valued these two pictures very much; not alone because he was a loyal subject himself, but because his uncle before him had a great regard for them; in fact, the latter named venerated them, and it was with no small matter of pride that he used to point them out to his friends, saying, "There's pictures for you—it beats all your naval or military battles 'to fits:'" that was his word; and he would not have exchanged them for the best that were to be found in the British Museum or National Gallery.

In addition to this, if I named a few old chairs, an

old sofa, a square mahogany table, and a numerous quantity of mining specimens placed on the mantelpiece, that had been dug up from the mine before mentioned—it will complete the inventory.

Tea being quite ready, all sat down to it, Jenny of course doing the honours, and very gracefully too, for she was well up to it, which any novice could tell with half an eye.

For the regular routine was followed out, of—"Do you take sugar?"

And in answering the question, by saying, "Two small knobs, if you please."

Think you the catechism is over? No: just as you begin sipping it away quite comfortably, in all probability your thoughts dwelling upon her dear little hand, which is shewn here to advantage, she concludes her interrogation by asking, in a soft and attentive voice, "Whether it is to your liking or not?"

And many times did Jenny's cousin, during his stay at Cleveland, almost forget himself, whilst looking at her pretty and pleasing features, and answer the latter question unconsciously by exclaiming suddenly, "Beautiful! lovely!" which, somehow or other, always caused the young lady to blush, and at times make mistakes, which our young beauty might say to herself, was "quite excusable under the circumstances."

A good deal might be said about those tea parties; but as space and time will not admit, we'll leave it to a well-known "skipper" on the other side of the Isthmus of Suez, it being rather more in his line, for he is very fond of them, and people have ill-naturedly remarked that it is a sign of his having been "crossed in love;" but true it is that, at every port he touches between Calcutta and Suez, he invites a number of his lady passengers on shore

to a "tea fight"—not husbands' beverage, when the liquid is not sufficiently strong to run out of the pet, but the pure leaf itself; and if any one calls on him in the interim, his deputy always knows where to direct them.

But, apropos, the tea being over, the three had a little chat, and in due course of time retired for the night, where we shall leave them for a time to enjoy their own thoughts.

CHAPTER IV.

"WHAT the deuce are you about," says Tom Jones, "with your pen in your hand so often? Why, you've become a perfect scribe."

"Well, I'll tell you if you won't laugh—I am writing a book."

"Writing a what?" exclaims he, accompanying the last inquiry with a downright "Oh, ha! he, he! are you mad? What, for heaven's sake, can you write about?" Then, putting on a severe cadaverous-looking face, continues, "Oh, I suppose it is about the spotted cow, or perhaps the grey mare? I hope you will succeed; at all events, put me down for six copies, if you please, and I will give you an I.O.U. for the damage." So, after having uttered these very encouraging words, puts his cheroot in his mouth, struts off in search of some excitement or other, and very likely might be seen, in the small hours of the morning, at some billiard table, drinking brandy and water, and playing "pool" with some of his gay associates.

Now, this identical Tom is a very good fellow in his

way, and particularly good-natured, but has not two ideas of his own to put together. If one of his "chuns," as he calls them, were to get into trouble, he would be the first to lend him a helping hand. We are sure, he would divide the last crust of bread, if there was any occasion for it. His great delight is in trying to outwit his creditors. His tailor, in particular, he thinks fair game; and it is astonishing to think how well he succeeds in keeping them at bay; for if he is dunned by that individual, he puts on the most serious face imaginable, and tells him, with the greatest regret depicted on his countenance, "that he is so sorry he had not called that morning, for at the present time he had not spare cash enough by him for the purpose. But never mind," says he, with his face all at once beaming with a benevolent smile, "I want a dress coat, and you can put it all down together, and provided it fits well, I'll settle at once; and I intend recommending you to my friend Fitz Stubbs, who is a regular swell, with lots of tin," and condescending to shake the poor representative of nine men by the hand, politely bows him out. And should he utter anything in reply, Tom says, "Oh! don't mention it; I hate the word obligation, all right;" and as the door closes on its hinges, enjoys a good hearty laugh to himself.

But he has not always been so successful; and when he is downright hard pushed, sends the bill, with a very dutiful letter, to his governor, who, generally speaking, remits the money, with a letter, saying "that it is positively the last that he will pay;" at the same time telling his very affectionate son, that "he thinks he is going to 'old Nick' fast;" all of which, Tom gives himself exactly twenty-four hours to forget.

Now, Tom was what they call in India a "Krazy" at

Balaklava, or, in other words, a clerk in the commissariat, and, in consequence, is the enviable possessor of a Crimean medal—much to his great delight, for he takes every opportunity of showing it, and at the same time looks mighty brave, although, if the truth was known, at night, when those sorties took place and the booming of artillery could be heard, he was in a great fright; and at the time, he used to acknowledge to himself, that “he would not venture his valuable life up in those nasty trenches, if the government were to offer him the Isle of Wight as a reward for doing the same.” However, as we are not writing the confessions of Tom Jones, we will take up our pen, whilst he struts out, as large as life, in search of excitement.

To continue our story, the sick man, or Cousin Harry, or Harry Acquilier—for that was the name he rejoiced in—had been located at Cleveland for upwards of a week, and had asked, as a particular favour, that no parties should be given; for Ned and Jenny thought at first it would amuse him, and tend to pass away the time. He, on the contrary, wished for rest and quietness, and appeared to enjoy nothing better than to limp about in the cherry gardens with his fair companion, and talk about bygone days, for they had passed a great deal of their time together, when children.

For instance, he would say, “Look here, fair coz.; do you recollect such and such a tree—that is the one,” pointing to a very large one, “that I got up, and hid myself away from poor grandfather, as I saw him coming, and when he asked you what had become of me, you told him, with a very serious look, that I had just turned the corner. Most likely, had he caught me climbing—for he never allowed it—I should have been locked up. And when he was gone, do you not recollect how quickly

I got down, and we went back, by the little path close to the gooseberry bushes, hand in hand? And, Jenny—don't blush—don't you recollect my saying, 'you are my little sweetheart,' and how we entered into a mutual agreement that we would wait for each other, children as we were?"

Many were the little anecdotes they told of each other; but Jenny could only recollect, "that she always called him a 'muff,' and imagined that as he grew older so he would be wiser and steadier. But instead of that," she would say, with her pretty eyes glistening again, "you have become much worse, and almost unbearable. Were it not that you required a moving walking stick to help you along, I wouldn't be seen in a twenty-acre field with you." It will be needless to say, the days passed away as hours, and the latter as minutes.

Now it has been before noticed, no company were invited, but an occasional neighbouring farmer, or other, would drop in casually sometimes; and after partaking of a glass of grog and a pipe of "baccy," would leave again. All did this, with the exception of one, who used always to remain, seeming not to be able to tear himself away, as if some powerful magnet were attracting him to the spot. His name was Richard Norton, but better known in the parish he belonged to by the soubriquet of "Farmer Dick." He was far from prepossessing at first sight, being of an extremely dark complexion, even more so than the gypsies; but on looking closer, one would find altogether a look of honesty about his face there was no mistaking. Strange as it may appear, both took a dislike to each other at the first glance. Whether Harry Acquilier's prejudice arose from the fact that Farmer Dick stopped longer than the others, or because he had such an extraordinary way of looking through his dark

long eyelashes whenever he addressed Miss J-e-a-ne, as he usually pronounced her Christian name, is a riddle which shall be left for our young beauty to answer. Perhaps a little jealousy on each side was the principal cause. Jenny was taxed by her cousin with the offence, if it could be so termed, of having a sneaking regard for Farmer Dick, although by what right the question was asked, he hardly knew himself. But the young lady was not to be so easily caught,—turning it cleverly off with a light-hearted laugh, and the exclamation of—“Farmer Dick is at times very amusing, certainly, and consequently a favourite of mine.”

The invalid having become convalescent, a little fishing party was made up, including Farmer Dick amongst the number. Ned Middleton had a small salmon net of his own, which was kept on purpose for sport; consequently, when the time arrived, all was in readiness. Each wore, as a matter of course, large fishing boots; and it was during the hauling in of the net that Farmer Dick, in all probability thinking there was not sufficient excitement, thought proper to get up a little artificially, by pelting Ned with mud and water. The latter stood it good-humouredly for some little time, telling his tormentor, in a complimentary kind of tone, “not to make a fool of himself.” This wholesome advice, which was given gratis, not having had the desired effect on the one it was intended for, Ned thought, perhaps, that a lesson on the subject, to illustrate his ideas more fully, might prove of greater utility; so taking Farmer Dick hold with one hand, he with the other ducked his head under, asking him, whilst performing the feat, “whether he saw any stars, or heard any thunder, in that submarine locality?” The experiment quite succeeded in damping Farmer Dick’s ardour, and as he issued forth, covered

with dirt and muddy water, these present were almost convulsed with laughter at his general appearance, he being more like a drowned rat than anything else.

Farmer Dick now only wanted some one to vent his spleen upon, and without more ado fixed on Harry Acquilier, saying, with his eyes flashing fire, "So you be laughing at me, be he-e—*you* of all the rest? I've not commenced with he-e yet, *danghe-s*, and that you will find out soon enough. I s'pose you think yourself a vine veller 'cause you've been to the wars, but I wonder *where's your medal to show for it?*" And observing that his uncouth words had touched his victim in a sore point, burst out into a gruff "haw, haw."

"Come, come," interrupted Ned Middleton, good-naturedly, "you served me out first, and I did but return it in *your own coin*, so don't quarrel with Cousin Harry there, as he is no match for you, having been too long on the sick list for the game of '*dot and carry two*.'"

There is no saying how matters would have been settled, had not Ned interfered; for both appeared to be a little warm on the affair. This trivial little occurrence put a stop to fishing for that day, and on their way back Farmer Dick tried to manoeuvre so as not to let Jenny see him before he had changed his saturated and bespattered garments; for Ned would insist on his not returning to his home in such a plight, consequently there was no help for it; but on nearing Cleveland he felt rather nervous, and stammered out, "I'll go in the back way, so as not to make the carpet dirty." Seeing how matters stood—for a straw will at times show which way the wind blows—they kept their countenance, all enjoying the fun meanwhile exceedingly; but on entering, soon found that the news—ill news *will* always fly fast—had reached there before them, for Jenny was in

high glee, laughing right merrily at the treat in store. Behind her were all the servant maidens, looking through the chinks of the door, with their mouths widely extended. When the former *could* speak, she exclaimed, in a semi-comic alarmed tone of voice, "Why, you've not drowned him downright surely? What is become of Farmer Dick?"

At this moment a perfect yell was raised, from unseen places, of—" *There he is;*" and the laugh, that had been stifled so long, burst out into one loud chorus, in which all joined. Jenny, who could with much difficulty speak all this time, recovered her self-possession, and drawing herself up in a very stately manner, said, "On my word, gentlemen, you appear to be greatly delighted and pleased at something; pray, may I ask whom you have brought here in such a sad plight?"

Farmer Dick, who was looking pitiful enough, gave her one of his peculiar looks, and replied whiningly, "Doante-e know, Miss Je-a-n-e?—its only I, Farmer Dick."

At which there was a fresh roar of laughter. Jenny's kind heart could resist no longer; and, with a look of compassion, becked him up stairs to her brother's room.

After Farmer Dick had changed, and made himself a little more decent, he again entered the happy little circle. But it was evident he was not exactly himself; for during dinner scarcely a word was uttered by him, looking meanwhile most decidedly sulky; and, at dessert, he was observed to drink more than usual, which began to *tell* soon after, for he slipped at last quietly off the chair and underneath the table, which gave his host some little trouble in getting him up stairs to bed,—no little difficulty, as he was rather obstreperous in his cups. But having announced the fact, we will leave him a

short time to recover from the effects of what Mr. Snodgrass, of Pickwick celebrity, calls "the salmon," and give a peep at those who were enjoying themselves underneath.

All the fishing party had left, consequently the two cousins found themselves alone. Neither spoke for some time. At last Jenny broke the silence by saying, "I suppose you wonder to see him," pointing with her fore finger up stairs, "here so often?"

"Not at all was the quick answer," which was accompanied with a peculiar look, which made her appear distressed and annoyed, without having an opportunity of clearing it. After an interval of a minute, she turned quickly round, and, looking her companion full in the face, said, "Oh! so you have heard of it already, have you?"

"No, I can't say I heard it before, but guessed as much," was the quick reply.

Jenny coloured very red in the face, but recovering herself, exclaimed, "What do you mean?"

"No, no! that's not fair, my pretty coz.; I shan't answer that."

"Well," cries Jenny, "I hate all secrets, or mysterious words, and will tell you candidly what I meant, and which is the only reason he is borne with here. My brother Ned is very sweet on Dick Norton's sister, a very pretty young girl, called Fanny. She is, I suppose, about nine years younger than him, and is, with all her beauty, a little flighty, but I think would make him a good wife, notwithstanding. However, I shan't say any more, as it is not my business."

Her companion gave an exclamation of, "Oh, oh! Master Ned, you are not at all sly—not a bit;" then gave a low and long whistle.

"Why, you appear astonished. What *did you think* I meant, for goodness' sake?"

At this moment, Ned made his appearance and broke off the conversation. He was in capital spirits, and he said, "I've just left Dick, who is snoring away as happy as possible. I have been painting him a little bit, and if he knows himself in the morning, I am much mistaken. Luckily I had some vermillion by me, and I have given him the benefit of a little, just to improve his complexion."

Jenny said, "It was too bad," but appeared to enjoy it amazingly.

"Now, Harry, my boy" continued Ned, "I vote we fill our pipes, and go out and sit in the bower, and you shall spin us a yarn of whatever length you like."

"Then, I'll go too," echoed his sister, and running to get her work, they were all three seated comfortably in a short time, the two smoking, and Jenny busy at something very like "chicken work," which is the name they give embroidery in India.

"Now, then, what shall this 'yarn' be about?" commenced Harry Acquilier. "Will you have a tragedy? a farce? or what would you like?"

"Oh, tell us about your cruise up in the Crimea," exclaimed both, in the same breath; "how our poor fellows fared up there; and begin from the day you left Plymouth, with your travels through France, or any other place you touched at on your way." So, after a sip of grog, a puff-puff at the pipe, with an "ahem," &c., he began.

"Well, I will do my best; but it is too long to tell in one evening, and with your permission, will give you a short stave every opportunity when you feel inclined to hear it."

"Agreed, agreed," answered both; "pray, proceed."

"With regard to my departure from Plymouth," commenced Harry Acquilier, "I will simply inform you how it came about, taking care to be as concise as possible. I was lying quietly in my bed, in a very snug comfortable room, at my father and mother's house. A nice fire was burning there—just such a cheerful one as people talk of in India, who have not seen the shadow of a blaze for many a year, when in the middle of a happy dream of my schoolboy days—which consisted of either a game of cricket on the 'Hoe,' or a swim at the 'Round of Beef'—I was suddenly aroused from my slumbers by a rap-tap-tap-tap at my door, loud enough to arouse the whole street; and on my singing out—(as I had always been in the habit of doing at sea, in my cabin, when the quarter-master knocked to inform me of the interesting fact that it was eight bells)—'Come in,' simultaneously, as it were, in peeped the half of a head, and that part covered over with one of those nice little French caps. It was our servant Sarah, or 'Saireh,' as she was generally called. Being a little ruffled, as it were, at being so unceremoniously disturbed, I growled out at the top of my voice, 'What is the matter? you are always bothering me, and are without exception the greatest . . . there take that for your pains,' at the same time shying a pillow at her head; 'I can't rest for you, no peace day or night; what is it you want?'

"Opening the door cautiously, for she had closed it immediately on seeing me take hold of the pillow, she said, with a sly look of caution, 'Now, then, Master 'Arry, this is too bad; there you be agin, a *kicking up a Bob's a-dyin*'. Ees, I'll give Missus warning at wance, I won't stay in the 'ouse with he-e, no nor yet in the same street. Here be I sent by yer mother to call he-e, and

to say that it is past ten o'clock, and you're to get up d'rectly—eez, d'rectly, that was the wurd; for her says, he-e ought to go to church; and listen to me a moment, Master 'Arry,' continued the girl, speaking very low, with her eyes twinkling merrily, as if enjoying her own thoughts; 'Missus observed how that you was a good boy last night, because you came 'ome early; she heard the clock strike eleven, when those 'orrid stairs creaked—capital, wasn't it? Do he-e know I put it back as usual a 'our or two, and all right agin in the morning. But I'm afeard she'll find it out some of those hodd days; for her said the other marning, drat her, that the marning passed very quickly; how that her awoke up about four, and jest turned round when her heard six go—very strange, wasn't it? said she, looking very cum-tickle-like at me. 'But do he-e get up, that's a dearie; here's yer 'ot wat-ter and clean boots waiting.'

"If you'll come in, Sarah, and repeat that pretty little speech over again, I'll get up instanter,' I exclaimed.

'Go in the same room with he-e!' interrupted Sarah. 'If that doesn't beat hen-wrestling, and no mistake.- I'd rayther trust myself in the room with a madman; and, look here,' continued the girl, 'I always thought you was a *drumledane*, but never before did I think he-e *tenpence ha'penny short of a shilling*. Now, I'm burned if I don't serve he-e out. Here's a letter that I've got for he-e, just come by the post; I had forgotten it; eez, and it's in a lady's 'andwriting, too.'

"Hand it in.'

'Well, get up, then; you shan't have it till you get up, and shave fuss.'

"I was very anxious to know who it came from; and although longing to see it, the designing vixen would

not let me have it before I had dressed, she having taken proper precautions in locking the door on the outside. So, dressing myself as quickly as possible—much to her amusement, for she continued chattering the whole of the time, begging of me ‘not to cut myself,’ and to be very particular about my neck-tie, ‘for,’ as she said, ‘I always likes to see a choker tied properly.’

“As I was in the middle of the latter performance, a voice below-stairs was heard, saying, ‘Saireh, you are wanted d’rectly;’ at which she thrust a letter under the door. It was addressed in a good round business-like hand, and its contents were as under:—

‘London, January, 185 .

‘My dear Sir, .

‘I think you will be required to proceed at once to the Black Sea, to relieve the . . . of the C——o; and you had better, therefore, lose no time in coming to London prepared to start.—Yours very truly,
‘—— ———.’

“My first exclamation was, ‘Well, I’ll be hanged if that hussy has not served me out at last!’ and after having taken a look in the glass and put on my boots, sallied down stairs into the breakfast room, where I found my father and mother about to go to church; so I waited for my opportunity, and when I saw Sarah coming in with the breakfast things in her strong arms, said, ‘Well, I am off at last.’

“‘Off where?’ cried my father and mother, in the same breath.’

“‘Off to the wars,’ I replied, at the same time appearing very unconcerned. Now, whether Sarah tript herself up in the carpet or not, or whether her dress be-

came entangled in the door, I can't say ; but by some means or other, down went the sugar basin, milk jug, &c., with the cup and saucer as a winder-up, much to the annoyance of a huge tom cat, that felt rather partial to the fire, and did not like being disturbed.

" 'What *are* you about?' said my mother; 'how dreadfully careless servants are now-a-days, how stupid; and there is not any more milk in the house.'

" 'Oh, never mind,' I exclaimed, 'that doesn't trouble me much. I am getting very much like father every day, and in another month or so will follow his example altogether, and do without milk or sugar. By the bye, mother, how lucky it was you took my *dunnage* under your care: if you had not, I hardly know what I should have done.' Now, these two little compliments, well timed, put a stop to their fury; and poor Sarah, after having gathered up the contents of the tray, &c., gave me a look full of thankfulness and left the room, and shortly after my kind and loving father and mother followed her, and went to church.

" Well, cousins, I will not trouble your patience by going through the particulars of packing up. Suffice it to say, although it was Sarah's turn out that Sunday, she would persist in staying at home for the purpose of 'packing me off,' as she expressed herself. So, as I have made a beginning, I will give you the rest another time, as I am sure you have had quite enough."

" No, no, no," was the quick answer. " Stop," cried Ned; " replenish, my boy, and wet your whistle" (for they had the grog out with them), "and wash the cobwebs down."

Whilst they are doing this, we will give the reader our own version of his starting for London, *en route* to the Crimea, for we are bound to give a true and impartial account.

CHAPTER V.

PEOPLE who frequent theatres like a farce after a tragedy, because one counteracts the other, and places their minds on an equal balance; and when they give a thought about poor "Deedemona," and her jealous husband, "Othello," they turn naturally round to the ridiculous position the Egyptian mummy was placed in, when the old doctor was about to cut his toes off,—so in the midst of crying they cannot help laughing. And when they go to their peaceful homes,—which it is sincerely hoped they do,—the remark is made to each, other, "What an exceedingly pleasant evening we have passed." So, in like manner, it is near time for us to turn from the ridiculous, and give our favourite,—we mean our young beauty,—a benefit; for it is no use denying it, she is a "leetle" bit sentimental; and those people, let it be observed, we like.

Well, Cousin Harry, or Harry Acquilier, as we have termed him—for we won't deny anything that has been said (let it be understood, we copy a kind-hearted old creature, an elderly admiralty agent, that we have fallen in with in our travels)—was, after dinner, always fond of arguing the point with some one, but unfortunately was not blessed with a very retentive memory, so necessary a gift for any one taking up those weapons; and after he had argued for upwards of an hour or more, holding on by every inch, he would suddenly forget himself, or, speaking nautically, "lose his reckoning," and turn directly round against himself, and when reminded of it, would stamp his foot, look very red in the face, drain his glass, which he was slightly partial to, and exclaim, "Then, da—e, *if I said it, I'll stick to it.* Jack

Seabreeze isn't the lad to leave his colours." It is needless to observe, this always silenced his opponent.

To continue. We will, as we said before, pass over that very tedious job of packing boxes, for whenever we attempted it we always managed to have the same beautifully arranged, very similar to a midshipman's chest, everything uppermost and nothing at hand. But Sarah took more care, and everything was properly stowed, with the inventory in the inside of the lid. The boxes were booked, labelled, and a rope lashing to bind them on the outside.

This over, we will follow him in his peregrinations. He had been out all the afternoon, as he said, to bid some of his friends good bye. We suppose he did, but returned home early to have a chat with his father and mother, on this his last night with them; and many were the kind injunctions he received from his affectionate parents, for they were fond of him and loved him.

"Well, Harry," his father would say, "I shall feel your loss very much when you go, for, without exception, you have been the life of us all. I am getting up in years now, my boy' (he was nearly seventy), 'and your gay cheerful laugh and song used to make me quite young again. But, then, never mind," exclaimed the kind-hearted old man, "it is all for your good, I daresay, and we must bow to the will of God," and then wiped away a tear from his eyes, old as he was. Reader, who can blame him? We fancy we hear you all say, "Bless him for that same."

Then it was his mother's turn. She said, "Now, my dear boy" (she always called him by that name), "do be careful of yourself: never sleep in damp sheets, and mind always wear flannels; change your stockings directly they are wet, and be careful of yourself, do," and then

commenced enumerating what she had bought for him, and how that "everything was marked." Many were the other little kindnesses and attentions shown to him; is it to be wondered at, then, if he felt their warm-heartedness, which he certainly did, and acutely too; for he could not help contrasting the time he was far away in a foreign clime, under a burning hot sun, with no one near who cared two pins whether he fell from the effects of a *coup de soleil*, or that fearful scourge cholera: it would have been only a nine hours' wonder.

"Come," the old gentleman would say, "let us all kneel down on our knees once more." He had always been in the habit of assembling his household, servants and all, at nine o'clock every Sunday evening. At that time, every one was obliged to be in, and woe be to any one who broke this rule. After reading those beautiful prayers in our Church of England service, and one of Watts' sermons, they bade each other good night, to retire to their beds, for the purpose of enjoying a good night's rest. All certainly did this but one—he who was about to depart on the forthcoming morrow. After sitting down in a chair, with both his hands supporting his temples for a short time, he grew restless, stood up, and paced the room with rapid strides, as if something was on his mind. He had not been doing this long when his mother knocked, and said kindly, "What is the matter, my son, that you are pacing the room so hurriedly?"

"Nothing, mother, nothing; only, I am thinking about what to do to-morrow. I must get up early, for the train leaves at six o'clock, and it will be quite dark."

"Oh, I will arrange all about your being called. Good night, go to sleep, that's a good boy."

"Good night, mother—God bless you."

Instead of sleeping, about an hour after he opened the door cautiously, groped his way down stairs, drew the bolt as steadily as he could, and passed out. It was a bitter cold rainy night. The wind came whistling and howling in fearful gusts, around the corners of the houses, in a most dismal and melancholy strain; it almost made any one shudder to hear it, leave alone feeling it. No one was seen in those melancholy deserted streets but the night watchman, and the poor scavengers gaining their hard-earned daily bread. Onward Harry Acquilier flew. He did not feel the wet or cold, although drenched through. He neither looked to the right or to the left, till he got to one of the principal thoroughfares. He then stopped close under a lamp, which was throwing its woolly and glimmering light along the foot pavement, and after looking carefully around, muttered between his teeth, "Disappointed, by Jove! What a fool I must be to think she would come, and wish me good-bye, and it might be for the last time perhaps. She must have got the message I sent her, but there, I'll wait a little longer," and so walked up and down, much to the annoyance of a "peeler" on the opposite side, for that watchful individual thought it looked very suspicious. After taking several turns to and fro, and having waited upwards of half an hour, he espied a female approaching him. Oh, joy! it must be she, he thought; but on her drawing nearer, found it was not. The young woman, for so it was, looked at him strangely enough, and more particularly so when he peered, with an inquiring look as it were, into her face, to see if it was she whom he expected. But, no; the young woman gave a cold shudder, drew her green shawl closer around her, and passed on, and in another minute or two was lost to view. Just as she disappeared, the old-fashioned

church clock chimed the hour of midnight, the sound of which grated, with a kind of sepulchral tone, solemnly on the listener's ear; so, after spending another half hour in the same lonely spot, without any appearance of having his wishes gratified of meeting the one he had come to seek, gave a last good look all around, and retraced his steps, muttering to himself, with a long-drawn sigh, "It is no good waiting any longer, and perhaps, after all, it is better that we should not meet again, for it would cause both of us much pain."

He walked back briskly; for being wet through, he was obliged to trot along sharply for the purpose of keeping himself warm; and not being exactly in the most cheerful mood imaginable, did not feel inclined to loiter on the way. At last, the house he had but a short time before left, was reached, just as the one o'clock train passed, giving in its flight a loud scream. To open the door with a latch key, with all due precautions as to arousing the inmates, was but the work of a minute; and carefully groping his way up the winding staircase, he soon entered his room, when, after quickly divesting himself of his wet garments, he was soon fast asleep.

Now, Sarah had received particular orders from her "Missus" to get up and make a warm cup of tea in time for Master Harry to take before he left, and that at half-past four punctually she was to arouse him. There was no occasion to tell her twice, as the poor "maid-of-all-work" did not sleep a wink the whole night; and as she laid awake noticing every hour the clock struck, thoughts would recur to her mind, one after another, of how much she was indebted to him who was about to depart. The many kindnesses she had received at his hands, the good and timely word he had spoken in her behalf, all passed in quick review before her vivid and perhaps somewhat

exaggerated imagination; and the word gratitude is almost too cold to express the feeling that this poor but honest girl felt for her young master. The very tone even of his voice, no matter however harshly uttered, sounded sweeter to her welcome ears than Piccolomini's soft musical notes did to the "live Yankee." Nor is it to be wondered at; for Sarah happened, unfortunately, to be one of those whose friends were few and far between, consequently, she could and did appreciate the hand that stretched itself out to help in the timely hour of need, thereby rescuing her perhaps from unknown miseries and wretchedness, at the same time procuring for her a comfortable home.

Poor Sarah was an orphan, and had by accident come to the house, asking for service as a maid-of-all-work, saying with a tremulous voice, as if fearing her mission would be in vain, "I can do anything, Mem.; I require no wages: all that I want is a roof to put my 'ead under, as my parients are dead and gone."

"Where have you been living?" inquired the good old lady, who was Harry Acquilier's mother.

"With my sister, until this morning," quickly replied the girl, with a slight emphasis on *this*; "and I should have remained, had she not asked me to do that which is wrong."

"What was that?" asked the old lady, a little curious.

"Oh, I can't abear to think of it, much less tell!" exclaimed the girl, sobbing piteously. "It was—it was she wanted me to be very, very wicked."

"Come, come, my good girl, tell me what it was."

"She wanted me to go and be one of those God-forgotten creatures, and live with a gentleman," answered the girl, her eyes flashing indignantly at the very thought. "I then thought, Mem., of what my poor dead mother

said to me. It was the last piece of advice she gave me:
 'In the hour of temptation, say these words to yourself:

I fear my God—I fear no man;
 For God can do what no man can.'

I did say them to myself, and told her I would do no such thing, but would make myself scarce at once, which I did, for fear they would force me; so I put on my bonnet, and left the house. I have called at a great many people's houses, but nobody would take me, because I had no character."

Now, the good old lady was really kind-hearted; but she had always acted up to the same thing herself—never took in any one without a reference from the last place; in fact, so particular had she been about this one crotchet, that if there were any newly married couple whom she knew, would always advise them never to take in any servant without a good character, "for now-a-days, no one knows who is who," so she would argue.

At this part of the proceedings, she observed her son coming. He had been home only three days, after an absence of eleven years in India. So, putting half-a-crown into her hand, the old lady said pettishly, "Well, here is something for you, but I really am not in want of any servant at present."

At this moment, her son bawled out, "Halloa! who have you got there?" and coming a little closer, said, with a look of sorrow, "Why, the poor girl is crying! what have you been saying to her?"

"Oh, nothing, Harry, nothing; she wants a situation, and can't get one.

"But you are in want of one," was the quick rejoinder.

Then his mother came up close to him, and whispered in his ear, "She has got no character."

"Oh, fiddle-de-dee! look at her face—that's quite enough for me; there's honesty depicted in every line of it. Come, come, mother; you must take her, to oblige me: it is the first favour I have asked for many a long day;" and seeing her hesitate, exclaimed, "Well! if you don't take her, I'll be hanged if I don't hire a house myself, and she shall be my housekeeper."

At this threat, she was taken immediately, and told to make herself at home with the others in the kitchen, and do as they told her. Now, several months had elapsed, and she had become a favourite, because she was always willing and glad to do anything for her young master, instead of her companions; for to tell the truth, he was not particularly liked by them, his temper having been spoiled whilst residing in a hot clime. In chatting about him to themselves over a nice cup of tea, one would say to the other, "Listen! there, I declare, if Master 'Arry and Saireh are not at it again—well I never, did you ever! If he hasn't thrown his boots down over the bannisters, and 'it Saireh in the head; she is black and blue, but only laughs at it. Just listen: he says they are not 'alf cleaned, and there she is, scrubbing away for her very life. I'd scrub—yes, I'd scrub *him*, that I would;" and as the virago said it, held up her "bunch of fives," and looked as if she could have annihilated him on the spot.

Had they taken the trouble to listen a little longer, they would have been surprised to hear the tone of kindness that was spoken after the boots were cleaned, quite different to what they could be trusted with, for they would take advantage of it, and the difference was, Sarah would not. For then it was, "Well, you are a good kind-hearted girl, Sarah; here's half-a-crown for you to buy ribbons with; I am sorry I did it—I hope it didn't hurt

you ; I wouldn't take the trouble about any of the others, and that you know."

" Why, Master 'Arry, what a fuss you be a-makin' ; I'd forgotten all about it ; and as for taking the money, I shall do no such thing. You be always giving me something or other, and you always speak to me kindly, just as if I was your equal—which God forbid I should ever think—quite different to any of the others ; for to them you speak quite grand-like, so distant, they are jealous about it, and try to put me against you, sir ; but I know what's what, and am not as big a fool as I look. No, no, sir ; it is a pleasure to me to be able to make myself useful ; and if I was to accept anything for it, it 'ud spoil it all. I am sure, sir, if you were to speak so distant-like to me, I should be thinking about it all day, and make all manner of blunders, that I should."

Seeing she would not receive the money, he would put it into his pocket, and with a playful good-humoured remark of, " I'll keep it for your wedding day, Sarah," so they would make it up.

After passing a restless night, the poor grateful creature, on hearing the clock strike four, dressed and got up, and with a heavy heart—for she thought it might be the last time she would have that opportunity—knocked at her master's door, and said, in a low stifling voice, " It is four o'clock, sir."

" All right," was the answer, and in a very short space of time, Harry was down stairs.

We will not detain the reader in giving an account of the parting : it was just what it ought to be between parents and their children ; the former thought how dull and melancholy the house would be on the morrow, and the latter could not help bringing to his mind the many acts of kindness he had received at their hands,

and how they humoured all his little whimsical fancies. Amongst those who were sorry for his leaving, it will be needless to mention the maid-of-all-work. All the time she was preparing breakfast, tears were flowing fast from her inflamed eyes ; and on being taxed about it, she said, wiping her face with her apron, " Drat those onions, they always make me cry."

Having drank a cup of tea, and wished them once more good-bye, Harry issued forth. It was still dark, being then about five o'clock, and he had to walk a short distance to the corner of the street, where the 'bus would pass, and take him up, to convey him to the station. But having arrived there, and the conveyance not being yet in sight, he leant against one of those letter boxes that had lately been erected. He had not been there many minutes, before he felt a touch on his elbow, and on looking round, he found it was Sarah, who had come, as she said, " to bring something Master 'Arry had forgotten," at the same time holding out a package containing eatables ; " and if you please, sir," continued the girl, " I take this opportunity of thanking you, which I do from my 'eart, for all your kindnesses to me. It's you that has been the true friend to me ; what would have become of me, were it not for you ?" and as if she felt more than she could give utterance to, commenced sobbing most piteously, with handkerchief to her eyes.

" Come, come, Sarah, don't cry, I am melancholy enough already ; dry up your tears ; and if you continue a good girl, you shall have that footman who brings flowers to you sometimes. What a swell you will cut with one in livery, with his cockade in his hat, so gaily walking through Plymouth streets, by your side."

Now, although this was said in a half-playful half-

serious tone, it soon appeared the girl did not at all relish it ; for instead of saying, as many in her position would have done, " Oh, he is too grand for me, sir," she took it for anything but a compliment, exclaiming, " Surely, Master 'Arry, you be joking? What ! me have a bone-polisher, or kitchen-corporal, for my 'usband? Not I ; poor as I be, I am too proud for that. No, sir, I would rather die a hold maid, than have one of those stuck-up know-nothing things. Why, all that they learn is to ape their masters ; and poor empty-headed fellows, they fancy they succeed. Only the other day, I went down to see Susannah Phillpots, a particular friend of mine, who lives at Squire Dodge's. Well, it was enough to make a cat laugh, to see how that fellow that brings me the flowers tried to show off. Says he to the cook, whose name is Muggens, and who is as black as charcoal, ' May I have the 'onour of taking wine with he-e,' at the same time passing his master's decanter, and looking as grand as if he was the Lord Tom Somebody."

" ' I wants none of your nonsense, Mis-ter Imperance,' says the cook, ' you knows I likes my beer.'

" Oh, if you had seen him, sir ! he was completely *flabbergasted*, and didn't try it on again till the dinner was over, for fear of having his 'allowance stopped ; but when 'twas finished, he thought he would try and impress on our minds what they lady visitors thought of him. Says he, ' It is—aw—confoundedly awkward, my—aw—meeting some of my master's friends sometimes—aw—in the streets, when I am in plain clothes ; for—aw—many of them bow to me. There's only the other day, the—aw—Mrs. and Miss—aw—So-and-So, who were driving out in their carriage, actually bowed, and gave me—aw—one of their sweet smiles,' and as the pompous ninny said this, he commenced ' putting his 'and through his

'air,' which is for all the world like a pound of farthing rushlights, being as straight as a yard of pump water. Luckily the drawing-room bell rang, and my noble was in his proper place again, and with a submissive shout of, 'Coming, sir,' closed the door. I couldn't have stood it much longer, so took advantage of the chance, and bolted."

"No, sir, if ever I do marry, I'd like to have somebody who can earn their daily bread by their own 'ands—a labouring man, I mean, no matter afloat or ashore. It 'uld be my greatest pride to keep his cottage clean, receive him with a smile when he came home, and study how to make him comfortable;" and as she said this, she looked around, and exclaimed, "The 'bus is a-coming, sir."

"Well, Sarah, I'll tell you the man that will suit you to a T, and that is Jemmie Sherell, the cabinet maker. He is a nice steady lad—so I have been told—and I know he promised, if you would become Mrs. Sherell, he would take you a trip to London; so you couldn't refuse him, after that."

"Lor'! Master 'Arry, I declare you be getting woser and woser. What! me have that little Four-foots, dirty Toothy, bunch of shavings? Not I; why, he doesn't know nuffing; can't even try on a new boot, without *putting his foot in it.*"

"Well, what do you do with the flowers, then?"

"Give them away, sir, directly I git 'em."

"Who to?"

"Ah, that's tellings! I'm not a-come to 'Hobson's choice yet, sir."

The 'bus having arrived, he got in, and wishing Sarah good-bye, was about to start; but the girl lingered, as if she wanted to say something; and looking in, with a

very peculiar twinkle in her eyes, said, "I give these flowers, sir, to Sam Cowley, the sailor, who came home the other day, 'valided, from the brave Captain Cappel's ship, the 'Dashing Acre,' what was up the Black Sea;" and before he had time to say a word in reply, she was off like a lamplighter.

After watching her retreating footsteps till she was out of sight, Harry muttered to himself, "Well, she is a queer one; poor Sarah!" leant back in the vehicle, and felt quite alone. He was soon lost in thought about those kind friends he had left behind; but the conveyance stopping suddenly, for it had arrived at the station, soon dispelled them all.

Having tendered his fare, and procured a ticket for London by the six o'clock train, he made the best of his way to the platform. It wanted a quarter of an hour to the time, and what transpired in that short interval we will leave for another chapter, as we intend giving our young beauty a benefit.

CHAPTER VI.

It has been already stated that Harry Acquier had made for the platform. It was still dark; and in the hurried glance which he cast around, he found but few there before him, and those appeared mostly of the labouring class, for it was the parliamentary train which left at that out-of-the-way, and uncomfortable hour. In fact, we have noticed that most railways in the United Kingdom manage it so that few people can take advantage of the "penny a milers." We suppose the different

directors study that for the benefit of their respective shareholders. It is not our wish to blame them for doing the same: we simply state the fact, and believe the public in general take little trouble to think about it: all that they *do* care about is having comfortable carriages provided for them, and that proper care and attention is paid to their comfort and safety, in which—thanks to the several hints they have received lately, in the way of being obliged to make compensation (if we may use the term) for broken heads and limbs—they appear to be improving. Contrast the first, second, or third class carriages, on the other side of the Channel, with those on one of our lines to a principal seaport, which shall be nameless, but where most of our travellers going foreign pass through, and you will find the conclusion to be as under:—

1st class carriage in this particular line is	=	2nd class in France.
2nd class	"	"
3rd class	"	"
		= 3rd class
		= Cattle, such as pigs,
		&c.

Poverty can be no excuse, as this particular railway declared a dividend of five per cent. at their last meeting. "We have said our say," and whoever attempts to "put the cap on," why, let it fit.

To continue. In the hurried glance which Harry Acquilier cast around, he had overlooked one amongst the number, and was first apprised of it by feeling a pretty little gloved hand thrust gently and lovingly, as it were, through his arm, whilst a soft musical voice at the same time said, "My dear Harry, I have been waiting here so long and anxiously for you this last hour," at once proclaiming her to be one of "England's merrie daughters."

We will make an attempt to describe her. With regard

to her age, she had seen twenty winters, but not as many summers ; or, in other words, was in her twentieth year. In height, she was what any one would call a fine grown girl ; and underneath a plain straw bonnet, trimmed simply with a shaded green ribbon, was to be seen as pretty a face as any one could desire. Over her well-shaped forehead was her beautiful wavy auburn hair, which was dressed plain and simple, in the good old English plan, not turned back in that horrible French style that we see every milliner with, as if the young girls now-a-days had no real foreheads at all, but brushed their hair back as far as they could, to show an artificial one. Under her nicely carved eyebrows were two such eyes, in colour what fortune-tellers would call dark or light, either, whichever would suit their purpose best ; but they were what we should call a dark brown, which were shaded with a pair of long dark eyelashes, as if nature knew their power, and threw a veil, as it were, over them, to lessen their brightness. But if there was any one part of her face better than the other, it was certainly the nose. It was what novelists call a " Grecian " one : that name would never satisfy us ; and we defy any one to find its equal, even if he were to look over all the Venuses, Psyches, or any of the goddesses that are to be found at that wonder of all wonders, the Crystal Palace. Inside a bell-shaped mouth was to be seen such a lovely row of teeth, as white as the driven snow, so regular, that when they were shown, one almost forgot to look at the cherry ripe lips that held them prisoners ; or to the little round narrow chin beneath. To conclude our description, we will only say her skin was beautifully fine and clear, the dimpled cheek being tinged slightly with a light delicate crimson, nicely shaded off. Her profile, altogether, was good to a fault.

It has been already said she wore a plain straw bonnet; and not, as many would expect, a flower garden around it, but trimmed neatly and tastefully. There was not even a single flower to be seen inside either, but simply a black and white border. Over her well-shaped shoulders was thrown an old Cashmere shawl, secured by a Maltese lava brooch; add to this a victorine, and we have done.

The answer she received was, "What, in the name of goodness, Annie, brought you out here so early?" and perceiving that his words, which certainly were not spoken in that kind tone which she had expected—for her beautiful eyes were in an instant suffused with tears—recovered himself by saying, "Well, come, my darling, I only wondered how you had ventured out in such a cold damp dismal morning as this: it is too much for your delicate frame; and see how early it is. How did you manage to get out without disturbing the house? and, by the by, how was it you did not meet me last night?"

In the midst of a whole host of questions such as this, he kept asking which for the purpose of employing her mind, and prevent her from saying that which he did not like to hear, and would not answer.

She would say, "Oh, I only heard of the appointment when it was too late. I could not get out, and I have lain awake all night thinking about it; and when I thought, dear Harry, of your being out in such weather in the cold heartless streets, and all for me, I was miserable; but then, I could not help it, and that you know. I am so glad to think I have seen you before you left; had you gone without my wishing you goodbye, I should never have forgiven myself. Oh, how I have dreaded this hour of parting! I do believe I have dreamt of it for the last month or more."

"Then you do love me a little bit, after all?"

"You know I do, Harry—dearly." This last answer was breathed in a low plaintive tone, as if the slightest doubt which had been expressed had touched her feelings.

"Well, then, my precious, as I have told you before, so do I you." He said this with such quickness, and so vehemently, that almost made his companion start; and as she scanned his sun-burnt face, his manly figure, with his excited look—for his eyes were lighted up with an almost supernatural brilliancy—she knew and felt that her love was returned with equal force as her own.

That moment was the happiest of her life; and if any one had given her the whole world, she could not resist putting her arms around his neck. But as their lips met, the Evil One was at work within, whispering to him, "Don't be taken in by a kiss from a woman."

He almost pushed her from him, at the same time saying, "Annie, it is no good—it won't do—this must not go on any longer. We can never be united, you know. I am not in a position to marry, and your father will never yield. Recollect, we part here," and giving her a hurried embrace, he jumped into the railway carriage. The door was slammed to, the whistle had gone, and the train was in motion, when she made a strong effort, reached the window, and in an agitated tone asked, "Where was he going, and to what ship?" The reply was, "God of heaven knows—I don't," and as the puff-puff of the steam engine increased at every stride, bearing him farther and faster away from the spot, giving him barely time to cast a farewell glance (which went to his cold worldly heart); for there she was, exactly as he had left her after his last cruel words, with both her hands held up as if in prayer. Another puff or two, a short curve, and the station was out of sight; a shrill

whistle or scream from the steam engine told him the train was passing under the house he had just left ; and his parents were, in all likelihood, saying, " Ah, there goes our son." He was pretty correct in his conjectures : they were ; and even Sarah said to herself, " Master Harry's off."

For the first twenty or thirty miles, he appeared to be almost in a trance : saw nothing and heard nothing ; his mind was in a perfect chaos ; first one thought, and then another, came floating by ; but so bewildered was he, that not one single object or idea could rest there a second.

At last daylight came, and on looking out he perceived the deep blue sea close at hand. The train, after having succeeded in surmounting numerous hills, and going down as many inclines—the latter at a most frightful pace—was passing between the pretty coasting towns of Teignmouth and Dawlish. The sea breeze seemed to cool his hot feverish brow, bringing him once more to his senses ; and as he watched the surf, that came splashing along the pebbly beach, as if to welcome him once more back to its elements, he muttered to himself—" Well, I am off at last : the first part of the play is over." But when his thoughts turned back to that pure innocent young girl, whom he knew had never, previous to her seeing him, known a day's trouble—had a kind parent, a comfortable home, and the world before her looking bright and cheerful ; when he thought how gay, cheerful, and light-hearted she was at their first meeting, and contrasted it with that morning, when he left her on the railway platform, with her uplifted hands, and bitter despair depicted on her angelic features, as if calling down the vengeance of heaven—his very heart sickened within him ; he ground his teeth and stamped his feet like a

maniac, much to the annoyance of an elderly gentleman, who was the only inmate of the carriage with him, and who at last said, in a most insinuating tone, "I beg pardon, sir, but are you—ah—unwell?"

"No," was the quick, but almost fierce answer; and silence reigned again.

The thoughts of her still kept haunting him. If he looked to the right or to the left, there she was right before his face, as last seen. Did the train stop at any of the stations, he was sure to see some young girl or other, with either a bonnet or some part of her dress that reminded him of the one he had gained the affections of, but had now so heartlessly deserted. At last he became so bad—for a perfect hell was reigning within—that he attempted to argue the point to himself. Thus he would think, "Oh, I only intended it for a little flirtation; many fellows have told me yarns about their sweethearts, just as bad as myself; and a few months' absence, or perhaps years, and it would all wear off; he would be sure to forget all about it, and most likely she would pick up that commander—"the shabby button," as she calls him—that pays her so much attention whenever he gets an opportunity—and very likely be married to him before I come back."

But this latter thought did not please him; and even his imagination which he had pictured made him feel the terrible pang of jealousy. Then he would think the other way—"Was it not a cowardly trick to win her affections, and then leave her? Can this be what they call love, that I feel towards her? I never felt so before. Impossible! If I were to tell some of my old shipmates of it, they would quiz me nicely, and say I was spooney. I'll have a cigar, and smoke it off, that's what I'll do." But when in the act of taking out his cheroot case, he ob-

served a small piece of paper, wrapped carefully up ; and on holding it up to the light, found the following verses written thereon :—

I DARE THEE TO FORGET ME.

I dare thee to forget me,
 Go wander where thou wilt ;
 Thy hand upon the vessel's wheel,
 Or on the sabre's hilt.
 Away ! thou'rt free o'er land or sea ;
 Go, rush to danger's brink ;
 But, oh ! thou canst not fly from thought ;
 Thy curse shall be to think.

Go to the merry banquet hall,
 Where fairer maidens bloom ;
 The thought of me shall make thee there
 Endure a deeper gloom.
 That thought shall turn the festive cup
 To poison, while you drink ;
 And while false smiles are on thy lips,
 Thy curse shall be to think.

Oh, think not to forget me,
 I'll haunt thee in thy sleep ;
 In dreams you'll cling to slimy rocks,
 Or hang the dangerous deep.
 You'll shriek for aid ; my feeble hand
 Shall hurl thee from the brink ;
 And when thou wak'st in wild dismay,
 Thy curse shall be to think.

When he finished reading, he almost gasped for breath. The perspiration came oozing off his forehead in large drops ; and the first thought that occurred to him was, how the paper came there ? as the case had always been in his pocket, and he had not missed it once. The more he attempted to unravel the mystery, the more he became puzzled. It seemed almost like a miracle—a

kind of warning or curse, as it were; for the last line seemed to him to have been already engraven on his heart. The words appeared, to his heated imagination, to be placed immediately before his blood-shot eyes, in letters written as large as life, "THY CURSE SHALL BE TO THINK."

We will pass over the remainder of the journey, and leave him to enjoy his own thoughts, and his trip to London, at which place the train arrived at six-o'clock in the evening.

Let us stop a moment, and ask any of our readers whether they have ever arrived at the Paddington station on a wet cold mucky winter's night; after travelling all day, and leaving kind friends, with perhaps some one they loved dearer than life itself, behind, and not felt melancholy, low-spirited—in fact, almost heart-broken? You are jolted out of your carriage as quick as possible by the railway officials; for these people (particularly Inspector No. 2) want to get the work done, so that they can go to their peaceful homes, where they are anxiously expected; and when you are on the platform, if not very careful, you get shoved about in a most annoying and very uncomfortable manner. Perhaps some person, for the purpose of getting before you, will tread (accidentally, of course) on a very sensitive corn, that you soon feel belongs to yourself, particularly as it is wet weather; and all the satisfaction you get is, that the "mannerly brute" gives you a smile; and a "I beg pardon, sir;" and whilst he attains his object, and passes on, you are left behind, to suffer the pain.

This brings to our recollection a little occurrence that took place at a "chee-chee" shop in Calcutta, not many years ago, where, amongst the numerous guests assembled, was a huge and extraordinary fat doctor, an Irish-

man by birth. It happened that he was particularly fond of carrying on a little innocent flirtation, and generally took the opportunity whilst dancing, which latter performance he prided himself on greatly ; in fact, he thought himself *au fait* at it ; for the simple reason that every one, seeing his weakness leant that way, praised him. He always reminded us of the elephant in Wombwell's celebrated menagerie, that jumped his rough and unwieldy carcase up and down in the most outlandish manner, and which was mentioned in the advertising bills as "dancing."

On this particular evening that we allude to, the doctor was, as usual, carrying on his old game with one of the pretty pinder-faced "Chee-chee" girls ; and after having trotted her out to three dances successively, and handed her any quantity of refreshments in the shape of "Simpkin Shrub" and "Buruff pawny," much to the annoyance of a long-shanked Anglo-Indian, who had the audacity, as the Doctor said afterwards, of "dressing himself up in the European costume," and with his very large white collar, which contrasted greatly with his dark coloured face, reminded one of seeing a New York serenader.

All passed off well whilst the Doctor confined himself to dancing ; but supper being announced, of course his natural politeness prompted him to hand his newly-found sweetheart down to the supper room. Unfortunately, though there was an abundance of the creature comforts, there was not room enough for half the guests to sit together at the table. So after a good deal of squeezing, chattering, and the Chee-chee exclamation of "Arrah Myr," it was settled the ladies should occupy the seats, whilst the gentlemen should stand behind and act the part of waiter to their respective spouses. Now, our friend *Pills* could never resist the temptation of seeing

so many good things, without helping to demolish them himself, and fixing his longing eyes on a plateful of ham sandwiches, whipped up half a dozen of them, while with the other hand he held a nice brimful frothy glass of Bass's Pale Ale, and was, just as the reader might imagine, making himself pretty comfortable, when, all at once, and most unexpectedly too, he felt some one treading on his sore corn. Looking round fiercely, as the reader can fancy, he observed an insolent nigger-looking puppy, with a glass to his eye, staring at him as complacently as if he had done a good thing, at the same time said, with the usual twang, "Was dat your foot?"

The next moment the glass of Bass's was poured out over the fellow's lilly-white waistcoat. He was the first of the family that wore such a thing, or handled a knife and fork.

When the doctor had emptied his capacious mouth, which took a little time, he said, "Yes: and was *dat* your best waistcoat?"

The New York serenader, as we have termed him,—for that was the individual,—had been much annoyed at being so completely "cut out," for she happened to be his Dinah; and thinking that a good opportunity for venting his spleen, had done it purposely, trusting to an Englishman's *politeness* and *forbearance* in looking it over, but in this case he was slightly mistaken. As the cowardly yelp made the best of his way out, completely saturated with beer, there was a general roar. He took very good care in not returning back again, and very likely at this present moment might be found amongst those worse than brute *seairs*, the Sepoy mutineers, that have treated our poor helpless countrywomen so badly, with their innocent children. Such a word as gratitude is not to be found in their dictionary.

They imbibe all the vices of the Europeans without their good parts; are up to all the chicanery, deceitfulness, and roguishness that man is subjected to. Out upon the cringing set, we say. Our very blood tingles as we write about the race. However, there is one consolation, a day of retribution is coming for them sooner or later. It is a mere matter of time.

We last left Harry Acquilier on the platform, at the Paddington station, on a cold wet winter's evening, and what with the different cries of, "Cab, sir?" "'Ansom your 'Onour!" "Bank?" "Charing Cross?" and numerous others of the same sort, which London abounds with, became, as a natural consequence, quite confused, and did not take advantage of any of their kind invitations, but gave over his baggage to the charge of one of the waiters of a neighbouring hotel, and quietly followed him. And so, having made good our promise, and given, as far as lies in our power, a true and unprejudiced version of his leaving Plymouth for the Great Metropolis, *en route* to the Crimea, we will turn back to the happy little party who were seated so cousinly together in Ned Middleton's bower, and allow him to tell his own story himself with regard to the rest of the journey.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER having replenished glasses and filled their pipes, two visitors presented themselves,—two young ladies,—the Miss Hewtons, intimate friends of Jenny's, who lived in the neighbourhood, and had called down, as they said, to inquire for her health, as she had not been seen

lately by any one ; and the conclusion they had come to was, she must be unwell,—nothing more or less.

We must excuse ourselves from describing them, but cannot help passing one little remark, which is this, our friend Acquilier noticed, that one sister echoed the words of the other. For instance: the eldest, whose name was Emma, would say, "What a lovely day we have had."

The younger, Amelia, would immediately exclaim, "Charming! is it not."

Again: if Amelia said, "Mamma desired us to say she had become frightened about you," the echo would be, "so frightened."

Thus they would go on. But, notwithstanding this fault, if it can be so called, they were both very nice girls,—very lady-like,—quiet; and, although highly accomplished, were never too eager to show it, as many young ladies are now-a-days. If they were asked to sing, they would do so at once, without any of that *affectation*, which spoils all. There too are many who think it is quite fashionable to have *colds* under such circumstances; but if the solicitation is not repeated, how soon you find them at the piano, running over an air so easily that it is quite sufficient to contradict themselves.

And again: they were not at all too proud to take the side set of a quadrille at any of their country parties, if they were required to make up a figure. But this latter kindness was but seldom wanted in their case; for, to the credit of the Devonshire lads, be it said, they generally got partners first, and occupied the post of honour, top and bottom.

Many people, who have lived in London all their lives, imagine the country ladies to be a rough, uncultivated, leارش set; and that the height of their accomplishments is to know how to make butter, darn stockings,

and cook a pudding. In all likelihood many can do those, at times, useful things. Are they to be thought the worst of for that? But place them in a drawing room, and you will find them equally at home, with one exception only, which is, they cannot talk a whole lot of nonsense, commonly called conversation; neither have they learned to lounge gracefully on the sofa, for the purpose of showing their nicely turned ankles off to the best advantage. If these two latter performances are supposed to show a lady's breeding, why the sooner our fair ones copy the young lady mentioned in the Vicar of Wakefield, who exclaimed, "she was in such a muck of sweat," the better. No: they would pass their opinion freely about the last lecture, and knew all about fancy work, &c.; had the last new music, and could play the *very last polka*; never spoke scandal, and although were never in London or Calcutta, did not like to hear a kind of *Mr. Treacle* or *Brimstone*-like (as Punch calls them) clergyman. The parish padre was quite good enough to satisfy them. A plain common-sense-like man gave them good wholesome sermons; visited the sick and poor; eschewed wearing rings on his fingers; and hated anything at all appertaining to theatrical performances in the pulpit; looked upon his flock as his congregation, not as his audience; and made himself generally beloved by his parishioners, for he had not a single quarrel with them.

By the by, now we have commenced contrasting town with country, let us observe, that we think, if it could be so managed, all young ladies should pass two or three years of their lives in the country, so that they could observe and enjoy nature. Let them take a run in the flowery green fields, study botany, see things in their true state—not artificially, and have a knowledge of things in

general ; and instead of making, as many do, poor, helpless, know-nothing, pale, delicate-looking wives, a burden to themselves, and to the poor unfortunate fellow who is linked with them, they would have a little colour in their cheeks without the trouble of painting, would be wiser, and (we feel certain) much happier ; and what they would appreciate the most, be more beloved by their husbands ; for tell us what man would like to have a poor pale-faced ignoramus for his partner—one who is only fit to be put in a glass case to be looked at ? We say ignorant, because they are so. How many are there in London, at this present moment, who have not the slightest idea what their daily bread is made of ? Some might answer, “ Of corn, to be sure.” Ask them to give a description, and they are quite at a loss. Yes ; we will assert there are hundreds, aye thousands, who could not answer that question satisfactorily ; but they are quite up to the last Italian opera, know all about Piccolomini, Grisi, Giuglini, with most of the other singing celebrities ; could even detail every part of “ *Il Trovatore*.” What nice extravagant wives some of them would make for a poor man ! It is a wonder they do not have a special clause inserted in their marriage settlement, that the husband is to have a box at the opera, and attend so many of Jullien’s concerts in a year. The Crystal Palace would be rather too common ; because, it being so inexpensive, every Joe takes his Jill there ; but, at all events, that would come as a matter of course, with all the other numerous etceteras, too long to detail here.

We must apologise, if any is required, for having contrasted the town with the country ; and if any one has any doubt about what we have said, let them take a trip down by the South Devon railway to Devonshire—in the excursion fortnight, if they choose—and judge for them-

selves. Should it be a young gentleman, take our advice, and shake off all snobism; give yourself no grand airs; be what your good common sense tells you what you ought to be, viz., simply yourself; and we promise you fair treatment, that you will enjoy yourself much, pass a very happy time of it, and in all likelihood, when you depart, leave your heart behind. But if, on the contrary, you attempt to patronise, they will "rig" you nicely, and you will certainly wish yourself far away, for you will feel very unhappy, and in a very little time begin to think you are not near so clever as you imagined.

As an instance of this, the following illustration may be given. A Cockney had made himself very unpopular by condemning everybody and everything that was not purely London, at a country party that was given, when it came to his unfortunate lot to be placed in the stool of repentance, was paid out in full, amidst the roars of laughter and cheers of the company. To those who have never seen this game played, perhaps it would not be out of place to describe it here; for who would not like to be reminded of their younger days?

At the beginning, some one of the party, a lady or gentleman—generally the latter—volunteers to sit on a stool, placed in the middle of the room; and to be stuck there all alone, to be stared and laughed at by a whole host of Devonshire girls, which we know to our cost, is not a very enviable position. Whilst the unfortunate victim is seated there, another person goes round, and gets an opinion from each by some little remark or other, in which there is very little ceremony. This is evident by the stifling roars of laughter, as if the very thoughts they had conjured up were quite sufficient, without their being uttered. When the latter person has finished, silence is proclaimed, and he or she looks at the stool,

and says, in the most provoking manner imaginable, "A lady [or gentleman, as the case may be] wishes to know how you curl your hair so beautifully;" or anything else they might pitch upon. The stool has then to guess (but only once to each remark) who said it; and should they miss it, another question or remark is put; and they have to go on guessing until they find out the right person, when they are relieved, and the one found out takes the turn. Many secrets are often wormed out by this game, and their faults are often truthfully told, which the victim knows in his heart to be true, and feels it accordingly. So it was in the case of the Cockney, who, among other defects, had an enormous long head—unusually so; and his mouth was so large, that being rather vain of his person, he was often seen screwing it into all sorts of extraordinary shapes, for the purpose of making it look smaller. Had not this latter piece of weakness on his part taken place, in all likelihood no notice would have been taken of it; for they were always very particular in not passing any unkind remarks relating to deformity; for they knew we were not our own makers, and if our shape was criticised, it was sinning before the Almighty. In this, as we have said before, they were very particular, even to a fault; and it was only his vanity they sought to touch, in which they perfectly succeeded; for when the question was put, "A young lady here present begs me to say that, being rather fond of pretty mouths, no matter what size, she wishes you not to screw up yours into such an unnatural shape, as she is very fond of seeing good teeth, which she thinks you are possessed of."

At that very moment, knowing where his fault lay, he was just in the act, and looked very much like a boy who had stolen a shilling, and was hiding it away in

his mouth to prevent detection on being searched by a "Peeler," and immediately the question was put, amidst the roars of laughter and red faces ! We can only compare his looks to the aforesaid little boy, on being found out with the stolen coin between his teeth.

It amounts to an impossibility, on our part, to describe the very ridiculous figure he cut. Suffice it to say, some one took compassion on him, and relieved him from his very uncomfortable position.

Now, generally speaking, Devonshire girls look up with a degree of awe and wonder to any one who has been living in the Great Metropolis ; thinking, of course, they must be clever and wise, seeing so much of the world, of the many grand and wonderful things they read of in newspapers, that when they are asked a question relating to any public institution or great work, they feel almost afraid to express an opinion, because, not being on the spot, and only knowing from what they read, imagine they are not able to judge ; and if they are dealt with gently about their ideas of town, the cockney, in return, will meet with great forbearance in regard to the country, and in the end, both will become wiser ; and instead of there being any unpleasantness or ill-feeling, he will tell his friends, on his return to town, that they are not quite so bearish and uncultivated as they have been told.

Enter into all their country games and amusements with cheerfulness and ardour. Should you not know how to handle a gun, do not be too proud to ask ; and not like our former friend, who, after boasting a great deal about the shooting galleries he had been to in London, found, after all his experience, to have learnt but little ; for on seeing the effect of a gun that was fired off by one of his companions—which "kicked" a little—he was de-

terminated to use more precaution, and when his turn came, held his weapon about a foot off from his shoulder: the rebound knocked him completely off the hedge or fence that he was standing on, and almost stunned him. This would not have occurred, had he not been too proud to admit that he knew nothing about it, and had asked for a little information, which they would have been but too glad to give.

Enough has been said, we are sure, about Devonshire, to make our readers believe that, if they like, they will pass a pleasant and merry time of it. One thing we are certain of, a hearty welcome will be given them, go when they will; and if the old maxim of, "bear and forbear," is acted upon, all will go well.

After the little party had chatted away pleasantly for some little time, planning all kinds of amusements in the shape of pic-nics and pleasant excursions, &c., they arose to depart with their brother, who had come to see them safe home; and it being too late to resume the narrative, they retired for the night.

CHAPTER VIII.

ONE of the servants at Cleveland was very superstitious; and having been reading lately of ghosts and goblins in some book or other that was made for money, it had entered deeply into her mind, so much so that her dreams that night had been a series of horrible sights, better known as nightmares; and, poor girl, she was glad enough when daylight appeared.

She carried her superstitious ideas so far, that she was

a perfect slave to her own silly thoughts. Did she forget anything—it was too unlucky to turn back. Was she going on any errand of importance—if the shoe that was thrown at her back, for luck sake, slipped by and missed her, it would cause very uneasy thoughts. If a thief appeared in the candle, all the doors and windows would be closely examined, to see if they were properly bolted and secured. At the sight of the new moon, the silver coin was turned, whilst she looked over her right shoulder. She would never help any one to salt, because it was helping them to sorrow. Did the stem of a tea leaf appear in her tea—it was a sure sign that a stranger was coming; and on biting it with her teeth, could distinguish whether it was male or female; and by placing it on the back of her hand, and giving it, carelessly as it were, a slap with the other, could tell the number of days before the aforesaid stranger would arrive. Never liked the fire to crack and throw out a spark, as it was spiteful. Many other silly notions and signs had she, too numerous to mention here; and like that prophetic almanack in London, whose name begins with a Z, who some few years ago happened to foretell a certain day in the year, which should be the coldest; and, wonderful to relate, stumbled upon the right one, by which he realised a handsome fortune; for the public did not take into consideration that the publisher had been guessing for a long time before, and accidentally succeeded at last. So, with this poor weak-minded servant, some of her prophecies came true.

When the three we left the night before had assembled the next morning, in the little parlour, awaiting breakfast, after the salutations of the day being passed, a frightful scream was heard, and the servant girl we have just mentioned came rushing in, screeching franti-

cally. Her hair was literally standing on end ; her eyes were glaring, and almost starting out of their sockets—turtle like ; and as she clung to her young mistress, shaking in every limb as if she had an attack of fever and ague on her, with large drops of perspiration oozing down her pale but otherwise healthy-looking cheeks, the trio looked at each other in amazement.

Jenny was the first to break the silence by saying, “Why, what is the matter, Amelia? what are you frightened about?”

The girl gave another frightful shout, and pointed to the door, whilst she screened herself behind a chair.

On looking in that direction, who should be standing in the doorway but Farmer Dick, whom we left some time since fast asleep, not exactly under the effects of chloroform, but from the quantity of grog he had drunk. It required a second look to convince them who it was. There he stood, like one transfixed, with his mouth open ; nostrils extended ; his eyes almost bloodshot, like two burnt holes in a blanket, and fixed, as it were, with a ghost-like look, on the superstitious Amelia behind the chair ; add to this his vermillion-painted face, unshaved chin, and disordered hair—for Ned had purposely taken away his looking glass and the necessaries for washing, the night before, so that he might appear the next morning before Jenny, whom he was sure would enjoy it much, and make great fun of him ; but he little thought it would end as it did.

It appeared poor Dick had awoke up with a raving headache, and feeling “rayther” thirsty, looked about for some fresh water ; and of course, not finding any, had dressed himself, wondering all the time how it was there was no looking glass or water jug ; and having finished his toilet as best he could, rang for the servant, who

knocked at the door, and asked what was wanted: Dick no sooner opened it, and showed his unlucky and besmeared-like physiognomy, than, instead of rendering him any aid or attending to his wants, she uttered the scream that was heard below, made one flying-leap from the top to the bottom of the flight of stairs, and appeared in the parlour in the state before mentioned; and Farmer Dick, thinking the girl was playing him some trick or other, gave chase; but on seeing them all looking so frightened, became quite dumb. The loud hearty laughter that followed made him almost believe, in his then present state of mind, that he was either out of his senses, or had got into some mad asylum or other. However, Aequilier led him to a glass by way of explanation, in which he no sooner looked, than he became almost as frightened as the poor servant girl, at his horrible looking countenance. Had he desired to appear as the Ghost, in Hamlet, he could not have succeeded better.

After the first shock, then came the ridiculous part of the play, which, to his sensitive mind, appeared much worse than it really was.

"What would all the young ladies in B——r say to it?" For they would be sure to hear all; and how nicely he would get laughed at: it was maddening to think of it. And Jenny, too—she, of all the rest.

As these thoughts ran through his confused mind, he paced the room with rapid strides, looking the very picture of despair; and it required all the coaxing and comforting his companion was possessed of, to make it appear light, by saying, "It was only a joke; he had been served worse than that many times, and succeeded in treating it lightly, and laughed it off."

At last Dick got calm, and holding out both hands,

exclaimed, "Well, Mister 'Arry, you be a downright good chap after all, and comfort a poor feller in distress. I am sorry I was so rough and snappish with he-e yesterday; but there, I have said I am sorry for it. Let us be friends for the future."

Having delivered himself of these words, which appeared to ease his conscience amazingly, he shook him by the hand, as only a Devonshire farmer can do; for they are unlike our aristocrats, giving a whole hand to their newest friends, and gradually decreasing their friendship down to a slight touch of the little finger, but show their liking or dislikings by the heartiness of the shake; and should any one be favoured with the latter, they might as well place their hand in a vice at once, for it takes the whole of the blood from that extreme, and for some little time afterwards you are reminded of it by feeling a slight tickling sensation, as it returns again. Farmer Dick was grasping him thus, looking at him with a peculiar twinkle from under his dark eye lashes,—as if wishing to say something, and yet had not courage,—then he as suddenly changed; for there came a scowl over his dark gipsy-like countenance, and turning his back on his newly acquired friend, muttered as if to himself, "There, it is of no use thinking of it."

"Thinking of what?" said his companion, at the same time twisting him round by the shoulder; and as he looked at him, with his hands on the Farmer's broad shoulders, straight in the face, as if he could read his inmost thoughts, perceived the eye drooped before him. So following up the little advantage gained, he exclaimed, "Look here, Dick, it is no use your trying to deceive me. I know as well as yourself what you were thinking about,—you never can like me. There,

don't turn, man ; look at me straight, and tell me candidly if it is not the case. Be careful how you answer, and speak the truth, for thereby your future happiness depends,—that is, if my conjectures are right."

The Farmer's countenance brightened up, and without quaking from the gaze that was on him, replied in a low husky voice, "Master Harry, you've wormed the secret out of me, which no living being but yourself knows ; and how you guessed it appears to me a wonder. I see and feel you know *all*, more than even *she* does ; for seeing my case was hopeless, I have not even breathed a single syllable,—not even to myself, for I know and feel that I am a miserable disappointed man." And raising his voice to the highest pitch of excitement, as if that was the only method he had of giving vent to his long pent-up feelings, cried out, "She is a perfect angel, Master Harry, and I love the very ground she treads on. Many a time have I bethought myself of leaving the country, to earn an honest livelihood in some foreign part,—far, far away across the seas, where people say gold is to be had for the asking,—I mean Australia. God knows I'd be sorry to leave my brothers and dear sisters, for they all try to make me gay and cheerful, but it won't do,—nothing will succeed." Then dropping his voice as if soliloquizing to himself, said, in a low feeling tone, "It must be done. Richard Norton, you will have to do it sooner or later: it will be a bitter pill to swallow, but do it you must. Then there is the old farm house, —I wouldn't change it for a palace: every corner of it is almost a part of myself. The pretty flower garden, too, which sister Fanny takes so much trouble about, for every flower has been planted by herself, and when she meets me at the gate every evening, and asks if I have brought her home any more cuttings, it goes to my

heart to think I shall have to leave them soon. But I cannot stay here, as everything, even the green hedges, the stony stile we have tripped across so often together, the very flowers, and everything beautiful and good reminds me of her."

At this part the strong man actually covered his face with both hands, as if trying to control his feelings. His companion allowed him to remain thus for some little time, for sorrow is at all times sacred; and after seeing the first outbreak was over, laid his hand gently on Farmer Dick's arm, and said in a soothing tone, "Come, come, Dick, my boy, don't give way; you know the old saying, 'a faint heart never won a fair lady.'"

"But I never did give way before you came home," was the almost sulky reply.

"Me! I came home! Why what silly notion have you got hold of now,—what should I have to do with it?"

"You have to do with it?—why simply this: you have won her affections. I know it for certain, for she watches you as a cat would a mouse; but she does not allow you to see it. Everything you do or say is right, whilst I am jilted with and made fun of; and to crown all, the fact is, you love one another, and in all likelihood will be married and happy ere long, whilst I poor ——"

Before he could finish, a hand was put over his mouth, and the reply was, "If it is me you are afraid of, why rest your heart content; for although Jenny and I love each other as cousins, I can assure you neither she or myself have ever so much as given it a thought about being nearer related. Having been brought up so much together, we look upon each other more as brother and sister than otherwise. So, as far as I am concerned, Dick, why provided the young lady consents,

go a-head; for be assured that I do not stand in the way. All that I know is this, if I am any judge, I feel certain she will be a prize as a wife to any honest fellow who is lucky enough to get her; and mark you, Farmer Dick, if he does not treat her well, here is one that will know the reason why," at the same time holding up his clenched fist.

The Farmer, who had listened attentively to this, to him, very welcome confession, was almost beside himself, which could be seen by his ever-changing countenance; for first it was white, then red, or, if possible, the two passions, *hope* and *despair*, conflicting with each other who should be master. When his companion had finished, he made him repeat it again, for fear what he heard was still a dream; and when convinced thoroughly to his satisfaction, he jumped and skipped about the room like a schoolboy that had just received a present of a new top.

Having finished his toilette, which he took a little more pains about than usual, they both went down stairs, where breakfast had been waiting for some time. We have not sufficient space here for detailing how that day passed. To Farmer Dick it was the happiest of his life, for Jenny had taken compassion on him, and had been kinder and less satirical than usual, thinking he had suffered quite enough already. Whilst, on the other hand, he, knowing now that he had no rival, was quite happy to imagine that the game was in his own hands, and thought it was a mere matter of time, when he should be able to change Miss Je-a-n-e to Mrs. Norton. There never was a truer saying than, "there is many a slip between the cup and the lip;" so, after wishing him luck, we will let him go on his way rejoicing, hoping at the same time he will not make too sure of his prize.

The little experience we have had in that line, reminds us that a *little* confidence will do ; but when it is overdone, young ladies won't have it, for they like to be courted properly, at least, before marriage. Many have heard, that *after* that ceremony has passed, *their turn comes*. So, having placed Farmer Dick in a very comfortable position, we will leave him for a time to ruminate on his success.

CHAPTER IX.

HERE they are again, comfortably seated down on a nice summer's evening, in the pleasant and shady bower at Cleveland,—the two with their pipes filled, and Jenny with her work.

"Well, Harry, go a-head again with the narrative," cries both the cousins at once.

After a minute or two of silence, as if thinking where he left off, Harry Acquilier commenced by saying,

"I won't trouble you by detailing minutely every little occurrence that took place on my way to London. How that I stopped at that station, and then at the other ; or of the news-boy at Bristol, who, on my handing him a half-a-crown for the day's *Times*, could not, after turning all his pockets inside out, find change till the train was in motion, when he made a mock attempt to overtake it, at the same time holding up the coins in the palm of his hand in the most provoking manner,—spoiling the pleasure you otherwise derive in reading that wonderful paper, by the unpleasant knowledge that, notwithstanding all your experience in travelling, you have been

done, and by a brat of a boy that most likely had never been out of his native town.

"Well, once having arrived in Town, as it is fashionably called, the next day I paid a visit to Leadenhall-street, wondering what the directors would say to me, for you know the C——o belonged to a company,—a very rich one too. Although they recognise nothing in the shape of *right* of pension to their old servants, yet they are extremely *liberal*; and any one who has served them zealously and faithfully for a number of years, need never be in want whilst the company exists. They appear to take for their motto, 'Live and let live,' in consequence of which it is a question of *quis separabit* between the employer and employee; for whilst efficiency, energy, and faithfulness is required with them, it is sure to get rewarded. In walking steadily along, all the time trying to compose my features into a becoming look of seriousness, I happened to glance over opposite to the India House, and perceived a gentleman issue from a cab, muffled to the eyes, showing most unmistakably, by his manner and actions, that he was not exactly at home in the then cold state of the atmosphere; for after pitching 'cabby' his fare, he went tripping along as if to get a little warm blood into his shrivelled-up and dark countenance.

"We both simultaneously, as it were, turned off from the street for the purpose of entering our respective edifices; and for myself, after proceeding through an archway into a court, opened a large unpretending swing door, which brought me once more into the company's offices, Leadenhall-street. On each side of the entrance were two counters running parallel to each other, and directly facing was a large clock and wind dial. The former appeared to assure the different shareholders

who entered therein, *that it knew the exact time of day*, and the latter seemed to impress upon all visitors the invaluable knowledge of *twiggling which way the wind blew*, which no one has been heard to doubt as yet. The left hand side was called 'The Company's,' whilst the right hand was designated, 'Managing Directors;' and although there was a kind of leader to each of the two departments, yet the only jealousy that existed was the one general wish emanating with the heads, and copied as a matter of policy by the juniors,—to vie with each other in doing their very utmost in order to perform the various duties that had been entrusted to their respective charges, with credit to themselves and benefit to the company that employed them. No red tape binding method was adopted in that edifice; for each had a certain responsibility of their own, as also a particular duty to attend to. They were supposed to be endowed with sufficient common sense and business tact, to be allowed a certain fair scope for the due accomplishment of their varied tasks, with every opportunity given of showing their abilities to the best advantage; and if there was to be a 'coming man,' as Dizzy calls him, all felt satisfied it would be the one who was most fitted.

"But it must not be supposed that amongst so many (for there were upwards of a hundred or more clerks in that office,) all were immaculate: such an assertion would not only be an exception to the general rule, but also against the doctrine of human nature, which would at once stamp this page with falsehood: consequently the truth shall be told. A few of those present *did* think as much about dress as about their duty, and were certainly got up in a most extensive style, well deserving the soubriquet given them, viz., *Ornamental young Gentlemen*. One of the foregoing attracted my attention particularly, and who, I

learnt afterwards, rejoiced in the familiar name of 'Charley.' He was evidently relating a very witty anecdote to some of his 'birds of a feather' who had assembled around him : the little group hiding themselves under the lee of a hugh desk almost weighed down with account books to prevent being seen by their superiors. Charley's humourous countenance, whilst relating the tale to his hearers, was ludicrous in the extreme, and kept his audience in one continual burst of suppressed laughter. The only kind of look this little knot gave (which numbered three or four), to such an insignificant individual as myself was a vacant stare, as much as to say 'How dee doo, old fellah? you're the wrong side of the countah!'

"Having taken off my hat in the most respectful manner imaginable, I ventured to speak to one of the many unassuming business-like men there, by saying 'I had received a letter ordering me to be in readiness to proceed to the Black Sea should I be wanted, and had come up to town for that purpose.

"He replied very kindly and homely as it were, 'I will just see if one of the Directors is inside, and tell him that you are here,' when he made his exit, passing on his way to a side door, a small wicket or gate.

"In another minute or two my friend made his appearance accompanied by a middle aged gentleman, when all at once, as if by magic or some extraordinary mechanical power, every one of the 'ornamental young gentlemen' were, to use a slang term, up to their eyes in business, scribbling away as fast as their fingers would allow them; and that very identical individual, Charley, who had been telling the last *on dit*, with the droll look, appeared now to be the most serious.

"The middle-aged gentleman was, as you will both readily imagine, A DIRECTOR.

"He was of middle stature, had a florid complexion, with a very quiet business-like manner; and, withal, a commanding address. But what took my attention most, was the extraordinary aptitude this thorough man of business had of answering the many questions put to him on his way from his private room to the particular spot in the office where I awaited him, assailed as he was by at least a dozen different clerks, with as many different questions; and in all probability (for it was *mail day*) the information required was concerning men and affairs or transactions thousands of miles away, the localities ranging between the home port of Southampton and the far distant ones of India, Australia, and China. How any one man could, at a minute's notice, carry his mind with such rapidity to so many different individuals, subjects, and climes, taking into consideration the great forethought each required, was to me a puzzle.

"The conclusion drawn from what I had myself witnessed during those few short minutes was, that he who performed that part had not only a full knowledge of the most minute detail, but held at his finger ends the thousand and one sensitive springs that kept this vast fabric at work with such clock-like regularity. Such were the thoughts that occupied my mind, when, all at once, I found myself face to face with him.

"Having given one of my most polite but respectful bows, which was duly acknowledged, he was the first to speak, by saying, 'Well Mr. Acquilier, how has your health been since your few months' stay in England?'

"I replied, Very well indeed, I thank you, sir.

"Ah! then, I suppose, you are not only well enough, but prepared to proceed to the Black Sea to join one of our ships there, employed in the Transport Service.'

"My immediate answer was, Quite, Sir, at a moment's notice.

“ ‘Then call again in an hour hence, when you shall receive your instructions,’ was the quiet but firm reply ; and after exchanging bows we both made our exit, he to his *sanctum sanctorum*, and your obedient servant to the street outside.

“ Exactly an hour had elapsed when I again called, and was informed that the choice was kindly given me of either going *viâ* Southampton, or across through France to Marseilles. I at once made up my mind to travel the latter route.

“ Finding it was too late that day to get across the Channel, I postponed my departure till the next morning, when, having procured from one of the outfitters a few things necessary for the climate to which I was going, I took my leave from the station at London Bridge, and arrived in Folkestone about noon. It was a bitter cold day : the country all the way down was completely covered with snow ; and to one like myself who had spent ten or eleven years in India, very miserable indeed.

“ Having embarked in the steamer which was to take me across, with several other passengers, the greater number of whom appeared to be old Indians, by the way in which they were muffled up ; and who, I could see by the motion of their lips and their savage-like look, were enjoying a quiet growl to themselves, and appeared very much annoyed because they could not give utterance to their feelings : had they done so, there would, in all probability, have been a few police cases. At last, just as we shoved off, and the captain of our craft sung out, ‘ LET GO ABAFT—FULL SPEED—PORT THE HELM,’—one of them close by me ventured to breathe aloud, ‘ Thank goodness, I am once more away from happy England, as they call it.’

"On looking whence it proceeded, my eye caught his. He was a man about forty; but, by his shrivelled-up dark face, looked at least ten years older. In him I recognised the same individual whom I had seen enter the India House the day preceding; so, thinking to pacify him a little, I ventured a remark, by saying—'There are worse countries going, Sir.'

"'Not a bit of it,' was the quick, but contradictory reply. 'For,' said he, in continuation, 'I was twenty-three years in India, always enjoyed good health, and only came home to renew old associations; and have just been what other people call *home* three months. From the first day I landed up to the present time, I have been miserable. I found if I opened my lips I had to pay somebody half a sovereign; and before I could shut them again, by Jove! I had to hand them another half. And again,' said he, raising his voice, 'If your *kitmutgar* or servant annoys you, why you cannot knock him down as we do in India, for fear of what the fellow calls *law*. No, no:' said he, 'I have had quite enough of it, and am too glad to get away.'

"At which he thrust his cold shrivelled-up hand into his pocket, and handed me his cigar case, which I found to contain beautiful Manilla cheroots. Having taken one each and lighted them, we both crept near the funnel, where we remained till we arrived at Boulogne, which was about four or five o'clock in the afternoon, after a cold and boisterous passage, the wind having shifted from north-east to south-west. Glad enough we were to get inside the pier for shelter; and after sheering nicely alongside, we landed.

"All at once I found myself in France, and, for the first time, began to find out that I couldn't speak the language. However, after jabbering and bullying with

the Custom-house authorities and cab-men, by some extraordinary means,—which I have never found out since,—I got myself with my baggage safely ensconced in a railway train for Paris, and nothing particular occurred till we arrived at Amiens, when, finding everybody getting out, and feeling rather hungry, I naturally imagined we must be stopping at a second Swindon station. On entering a doorway, with *restaurant* painted in large letters, I found the best part of my fellow travellers sitting down very cozily at a small round table, with lots of different viands before them. Not wishing to thrust myself into their company,—for every little table appeared to have its own party,—I seated myself quietly down at one which was vacant, and listened, in the hope of hearing some person speak English. Not so. Between the pop-pop of corks, and the chattering, the only word I could make out was *garçon*, which was uttered in rather a loud voice. The attendant immediately cast his eyes in the direction it came from, and answered, ‘*Messieu.*’ What the other said to him I could not understand; but he always got something brought him in the shape of eatables or drinkables.

“Now, as it happened, I had not eaten anything since morning; and what with the excitement and one thing and the other, I was not inclined until the present moment, when all at once I felt as if I could eat almost anything,—such a gnawing, craving at the stomach, that even one of those celebrated ‘Saltash biscuits’ would have been invaluable to me at the time. But how to procure anything in the shape of eatables was the puzzling question; for if I took it without asking, in all likelihood I might be taken up by the *John D’ Arms*, as I have heard the police called, and sent to prison for theft. When I was turning this

latter idea over in my mind, a thought—a lucky flash—struck me, which cheered me up greatly. It was this. I recollected, when at school, a French boy, that had been sent over to be educated in England, used to be called a number of French sentences, such as old *donnez moi, voulez vous, merci*, and a number of other French words which I could not then recollect. Now, I imagined that, perhaps, one of those sentences might be the meaning of something to eat. At all events, I soon made up my mind, or at least my stomach did, to try them: there was no harm in that. So collecting all my courage, and choosing a quiet moment, I bawled out at the top of my voice, *garçon*. ‘*Messieu*,’ was the immediate response. *Donnez moi*, said I, at which he muttered out something very much like—What do you say. I then put up my finger and pointed to my mouth and stomach.

“‘That, of course, was sufficient,’ interrupted Jenny.

“No it wasn’t, Coz.; what do you think he said?

“‘Can’t tell.’

“Well, all that he said was ‘to shrug his shoulders;’ and as my west-country blood was getting up, I thought I would try my luck once more. Just as he was turning his back on me, I cried out, *merci*.

“The only answer I received was a French word sounding with many r-r-r-r’s. That was quite enough for me. What I lacked in French I gave in English, Hindostanee, Singalese, and wound up with a few choice words in Chinese. But I had scarcely finished with this confused mixture of languages, relieving myself thereby exceedingly, when I observed an elderly gentleman hardly able to contain himself, or, in other words, highly amused, and was attempting to screen his face from me; but on glancing around, angrily, of course, I met his eye, at which he gave vent to his feelings, and

in a very mild gentlemanly voice said, 'I beg pardon, Sir, but you made use of a Chinese word or two just now which took my attention, and I fancy, somehow or the other, we have met before. May I ask if you were ever in Hong Kong?'

"Not being in the best humour imaginable, I grunted out that I had.

"At which he replied, 'I am Judge Home, and seeing you are not well up in your French, if you will join myself and friend, Doctor Cruson here, you are quite welcome.'

"I immediately accepted his very kind offer, and on comparing notes found we had been shipmates twice before up the China Sea. So having, after great difficulty, got something to eat, we again proceeded on our journey. They were on their way out by the Marseilles route to the Celestial Empire, consequently our road lay the same way. Nothing of importance occurred during the remainder of our journey to Paris.

"The railway officials were just the same kind of breed as they are in England, and had the same knack of calling out at the different stations the train stopped at, what was meant to sound like the name of the place, but in which they, like our countrymen, miserably failed.

"On arriving at the French capital, we were, I am glad to say, relieved altogether of our tickets, after being obliged to hand them out innumerable times for the purpose of having an additional hole bored through them, and which I think is done for the purpose of making some of the passengers lose them, so that they shall be made to pay over again. Having got into a *diligence*, we were, after about half an hour's rattling over a stony pavement, set down at the door of what I have since found out to be one of the fashionable

hotels, *Meurices*, in the Rue de Rivoli, just opposite to that splendid promenade, the Place de la Concorde, and not far from the Tuilleries—the residence of the Emperor Napoleon III.

“I have not time now to attempt giving you a description of that great and wonderful city; and, in fact, my stay was so short there, that I did not see a quarter of it. It is, without a doubt, a *grande ville*. Why, Jenny, one of the footpaths in the Boulevards is as wide as any of our streets in London. The houses are larger, and built with much better taste.

“I very soon found out that my two companions were as different from each other as chalk is from cheese, for whilst the Doctor was always in a great flurry about being left behind, the old Judge was the reverse, exclaiming, with a jolly laugh, ‘Lots of time,—lots of time;’ and what with each giving in a little, we managed to keep it very fairly at the different railway stations. After arriving at Lyons, at which place we stopped a night, we embarked in a very long steamer to proceed down the river Rhone to Avignon, where we arrived just in time to be too late for the train that night. We had the satisfaction of seeing it just going out of sight, much to the great regret and discomfiture of the Doctor, who looked the very picture of despair. Not so the old Judge, who, after he had enjoyed a good hearty laugh at his friend’s dejected looks, said, ‘Never mind, Doctor,—never mind: lots of time,—lots of time.’

“After debating a little about what was to be done,—should we have a special train?—we decided at last to go on as far as Arles, and the next day arrived at Marseilles, where we very soon embarked in one of the mail steamers, the *Vectis*, which left that same night for Malta with the Indian passengers going overland.

"After a very rough passage going through the Straits of Bonifacio, which separate Corsica from Sardinia, and passing in between the islands of Maritimo and Sicily, we made the island of Malta. After passing the western part and St. Paul's Bay—(by the by, Jenny, that is where the apostle St. Paul was cast away, and what they call 'Calle di San Paulo,' is to be seen there to this day, and all who go to the island visit it)—entered Quarantine Harbour, and anchored. My two friends, the old judge and doctor, parted with me to go in the other steamer that was to take them on to Alexandria. Sorry was I to lose them, as they appeared to me like old friends. I fancy seeing them now, pulling away in a small wherry from the Vectis; and the old judge's merry laugh and cry of 'lots of time' ringing in my ears, although it is some little time since, and most likely, I shall never see them again."

"That must be the worst of those short voyages," exclaimed Jenny; "for you no sooner get time to know each other than your passengers leave you, and in another day or so, you have precisely the same formality to go over again."

"But there is one thing," said Ned; "you must see lots of fun amongst so many passengers. What with dancing of an evening, the flirtations that are carried, on and (last but not least) amateur theatricals, as well as charades, your passengers must amuse themselves greatly; and altogether it must be a pleasing contrast to the long, rough, toilsome, monotonous voyage round the Cape, which they used to take. And I should think," continued Ned, "with such opportunities as you must have of judging character, that you could write a book which would be interesting, from the simple reason that all your characters might be real and not imaginary, as they would be drawn from life."

“Well, cousins, perhaps with a little encouragement, some of these odd days, I might make the attempt, for (as you observe) I have great advantages; what with the partings, meetings, match-makings, flirtations, and various other little scenes, which I meet with every voyage; and from the young cadet who has just left his mamma’s apron strings, and learnt to drink champagne, going out to India for the first time to seek fortune and a name; and the shrivelled-up yellow faced old Indian coming home, after having been absent from the land of his nativity for half a century, and who constantly grumbles about the claret and curries; why, enough could be said to fill more than a dozen books. Many are the (what the newspapers would designate) ‘romances in real life’ that cross my path; one of which occurred so recently, and came so closely under my own personal observation, that I will repeat it before I finish for this evening. It was this. On our voyage to Alexandria, some little time ago now, was, amongst our numerous passengers (for we had about a hundred and twenty in all), a newly married couple. The husband was a merchant, and was going out to Calcutta, a very nice gentlemanly fellow, indeed; and she a remarkably handsome woman. They were spending their honeymoon on board. In time, from some cause or other, we became very friendly; and never, do I think, were two better matched than they were: they sought no other company, but kept themselves aloof, seeming to have quite sufficient society in themselves. They were a world to each other. Often have I, whilst chatting to them of a morning, thought those two were happy indeed, and wondered whether such would ever be my fortunate lot.

“You may laugh, Jenny; but I can tell you I felt very lonely at the time, and some very serious thoughts came into my head.

"Well, at the termination of our voyage, amidst the bustle and hurry attending one of those large ships arriving in port, he very kindly made his way forward—no little difficulty at the time, the decks being covered with baggage, mails, and cargo—for the purpose of wishing me good-bye, at the same time doing so also for his wife. We hurriedly shook hands; and on looking towards the shore a short time after, I perceived this happy pair waving their handkerchiefs to me, as their last final adieu.

"They landed, made the best of their way over the Desert, down the Red Sea, and ultimately, as I read by a Calcutta paper, arrived safely at their destination. Notwithstanding the world of excitement I was mixed up with, a thought now and then of the young merchant and his wife would cross my mind,—like the sun on a wet cloudy melancholy day issuing out from the dark heavy clouds, and by his presence making everything look bright and cheerful, raising one's thoughts for a time to the One above, who made a sunny side to cheer us on our way.

"To make a long story short, about six months had rolled away, like as many hours, when I found myself once more in Alexandria, with the Indian passengers coming on board after a night's journey through the Desert,—such a contrast to the healthy spirited young girls that came out with us. I defy any one to distinguish between mistress and maid of the former. What with their sullen unhealthy countenances, their untidy ill-fashioned dress and shapeless bonnets, they were perfect frights. But there was one amongst their number not quite so untidy, who appeared, by her dejected looks and downcast eyes, to be almost worn out with fatigue and sorrow. She was dressed in widow's weeds.

A second look at her made the blood rush to my head ; and as she met me face to face in the companion or stairway, I muttered out, I think I have had the pleasure of seeing you somewhere before ?

"She gasped out in reply, 'C——o.'

"Surely it cannot be : and yet the face was the same. Yes : it is the young merchant's wife who went out with me a short time ago ; and on inquiry I found it to be too true.

"After spending a short time in Calcutta, her husband took sick of the cholera, and in about twenty-four hours after, he was no more. There was she in the midst of strangers, thousands of miles away from home, with no kind relatives to comfort and console her : her husband a corpse, and she, with all her bright hopes for the future, dashed to the ground,—'her world had passed away.' After she had laid the one she cherished so dearly in his last resting place, she took passage to come home, where she could be with her friends, and had arrived so far safely. The next day (poor woman !) she said, 'Mr. Acquillier, I was so sorry I could not speak to you yesterday, but my heart was too full ; I had not the power. But I suppose you know all ?'

"I answered, Yes, and at the same time added a few words of sympathy.

"During the trip home, which was about a fortnight, she appeared to have left this world altogether, and became completely wrapt up in her Bible ; for she might have been seen,—when all the other passengers were enjoying themselves and in good spirits, looking forward to arriving home, and meeting those that were near and dear to them,—sitting down in some lonesome corner, and getting consolation from the Book of Life.

"I see, Jenny, by my sad tale, I have made the tears

drop from your eyelids. Don't wipe them off, as you need not be ashamed; for who could see or hear about that poor woman's troubles, without being moved to compassion, she having been, during the short space of twelve months, a wife, widow, and a mother."

CHAPTER X.

Now, although we have given a description, as far as lies in our power, of the personal appearance of the young girl Harry Acquier had so heartlessly left at the Plymouth railway station, not a word has been said about her mental accomplishments. We confess we are like most people of the present day, who generally take the face and the dress as an index to the mind; and very seldom are we out in our calculation.

In the present instance, we certainly were correct; for she was religious without being what is called a *blue light*, and clever without aiming to the pretensions of a *blue stocking*. Fortunately or unfortunately, as the case may be, she had never been taught Latin or Greek, but certainly commenced with the French language, under the tuition of a French master,—one Monsieur De la Rue,—who used to pay the school she was placed in a visit twice a week. Those two days were called French days. Well might they be so termed: for certainly they were anything but English. The confusion of the Tower of Babel was nothing to it. If Ollendorff, who published the French Grammar, had heard how those young ladies hacked his book, he would

never have spoken another word of English in revenge. However, she succeeded in getting as far as the verb *aimer*, when the pinches in the ears she received from this Johnny Frog-O became so unbearable, that she at once told the school-mistress that she would decline going any farther in her French studies; "because," she said, "I am sure I shall never be able to twist my mouth into a French dictionary." Right glad are we that she did so; for if it had spoilt her pretty mouth by putting it out of shape,—much as we admire both the language and the French people,—we certainly should have felt called upon to demand satisfaction.

Now, this was quite a favourite trick of Monsieur's; and the young lady who had the prettiest and smallest ear used to be the greatest sufferer, and Annie Rennoldson—for that was her name, at least the one we shall give her—was the particular individual so honoured.

With regard to her proficiency in music, she had been taught the piano forte at the same school by one Mr. Beaufort, a gentleman who was particularly fond of wearing his hair very long, in ringlets, at the back of his head; indeed, the bunch of curls that made its appearance down the collar of his coat, which, by the by, was very greasy, reminded one of a whole lot of Chinamen's tails clustered together; and we feel certain that if he had paid a visit to the Celestial Empire he would have been held in great veneration on account of the aforesaid tails, by the Chinese, and most likely have been made a Mandarin of the first button, and have succeeded in procuring an interview with the emporor of that remote part of the world, which, at present, is more than the Russian plenipo' can.

Well, what with divers squeezes of the hands—for she had pretty shaped ones (and Mr. Beaufort was a good

judge, for, of course, at the commencement of his lessons he was *obliged* to hold his pupils by the wrist for the purpose of teaching them to touch the instrument gracefully, such as lifting the fingers at the conclusion of a note, and so on),—he succeeded with Annie Rennoldson much better than with many others, as her fingers were so tapered and pliant, as if intended by nature for that express purpose; and she could play, as well as most young ladies can now-a-days, sets of quadrilles, polkas without number, and accompany herself in a song, which latter performance she rather excelled in, having a nice sweet voice, with a good ear for music.

As for the dancing master, we fancy we hear our young beauty exclaiming, “A dancing *master*, indeed! what next?”

This school, let us tell her, had one. Such a buck was Monsieur Onfery! what an elaborate waistcoat he wore, with the frill of his shirt sticking out like so many porcupine’s quills! such an immense necktie, and extraordinarily cut clothes,—trowsers in particular; they had the appearance of a bag with an elastic fastening at the ancles, round his *tippy* patent-leather shining boots, with the long square toes sticking up at the extremity, just as if they thought themselves too good to touch Mother Earth. Altogether, when he made his appearance in the dancing room, he was just as if he had been taken carefully out of a bandbox, so neat and trim was he. “Now, ladies,” would he exclaim, with his violin on his shoulder, and raising the bow, as it were, a little, to give effect to his words, “Select your partners for a polka.”

No gentlemen, of course, were allowed—much to the annoyance of big Miss Hay, who used to remark that she was tired of being turned into a gentleman, and she

was quite sure that if she was invited to a ball she should forget herself and put her arm round the gentleman's waist, which, some of her companions remarked, would be a very good joke.

After a good deal of tittering and giggling, the eldest or big ones acting the part of the opposite sex, going through the form of asking their younger companions "the honor of dancing the next polka," at the same time holding out their arms in the most tempting manner conceivable. At a given signal,—a scrape of the fiddle,—off they started to the tune of a very lively polka. The first two or three rounds went rather stiffly, for they were obliged to be careful, as the Monsieur, at the outset, always noticed them by calling out at the top of his voice, "Come, ladies, time—one, two; one, two; there, ah, that's it! Miss Tindell, don't hug your partner so close; is that the way they dance in your country?" She was a "Chee-chee."

After this they had it all their own way, and were just beginning to enjoy themselves, spinning round at a most frightful pace, when the music ceased. In the Monsieur's opinion, they were now fit for quadrilles; and quicker than we can write they had placed themselves in position for that good English dance, and going through the figure, with the cry from the Master of, "Right, left; left, right; set; ladies' chain, &c.," when poor little Miss Ponsford, the hotel keeper's daughter, accidentally tripped as she was swinging round. The dance was immediately stopped, for the Monsieur said she was very awkward, and he intended putting her through the positions. To have seen him with his fiddle-bow tapping her chin for the purpose of keeping her head up; and then her tiny feet, in order to fix them out at the right angle for position the first, amid the stifled giggling

laughter of those grown-up young ladies there assembled, was a scene that would have suited Leech's pencil much better than his "Sea Shore Nymphs." He might have given some idea of the ludicrous picture, which is more than can be done here, *drawing* not being exactly our *forte*, without its corks or bills—at that little amusing game, let it be confessed we are *au fait*.

Under such tuition, could any one be astonished if it is stated that Miss Rennoldson danced well? She could also sketch a little; and all the other accomplishments that are required for young ladies in these modern times, but too long to detail here. She had left school now some years, and had only known Harry Acquilier eight months previous to the date mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. They had first met by accident in the public street, and in the glance they gave each other, both felt some extraordinary and unaccountable sensation. It was love at first sight.

He immediately, with all despatch, set his wits to work for the purpose of getting an introduction, which, after some trouble, he succeeded in doing, through the kindness of a friend; no little difficulty, she being the only child. Her father, a wealthy old miser, would not allow her to see much company, or, in other words, kept a very *taut* hand over her. But notwithstanding this little drawback, they managed to meet often at the mutual friend's house,—of course it was quite accidental,—and the time passed away very pleasantly in each other's company.

In his eyes she was the ideal of all that he had ever dreamt of when far across the seas, and appeared as an angel sent down to reclaim him, for wild, very wild, he had been; and her pure innocent unaffected conversation, particularly on religious subjects, did wonders in bringing him once more to the right path.

She, on the other hand, was never tired of his yarns ; and whether it was the ship on fire, the fierce hurricane in the wild Atlantic, the cyclone in the Indian Ocean, the typhoon in the China seas, or an account of his wreck under Mount Sinai, in the Red Sea, where he had been cast away, and had to swim for his life on a dark stormy night ; all these exciting stories were listened to with intense interest, she little thinking at the time how his smooth oily voice was entering deep into her very soul. And often at night, in her dreams, did she fancy she was either clinging to some frail plank amidst the roaring and gurgling of the wild waters, or hearing that dreadful cry of, "The ship on fire !" In these imaginary cases of danger, *he* always appeared, and at the risk of his own life saved hers. How sorry she was to find it, when she awoke, to be but a dream.

This could not last long. Although not a word of love had passed their lips as yet, their hearts were closely united together ; they were never happy but in each other's company.

What part did the friend take ? some of our readers might enquire.

She was a widow lady who saw it, and understood the whole affair, secretly conniving at the same.

If the pair had only taken old Weller's advice, given in the justly celebrated "Pickwick Papers," when he exclaimed to his very affectionate son, "Samivel, take example by your father, my boy, and be werry careful o' widders," both might have saved themselves many pangs and heart-burnings.

The secret, if such it can be called, broke forth one day, and showed each their true position,—not by any premeditation whatever on their part, neither did they imitate the Devonshire ploughboy, who, when he was helping his sweetheart over the stile, with her back

turned towards him, plucked up sufficient courage, and exclaimed in a loud voice, "Sal', wull he hae me? there, I'm glad I've zaid it;"—but by some stray word, some slight *lapsus linguae*. Both had gone too far to retrace their steps, whatever they might have wished at the moment; and as their eyes met, speaking a world of meaning (to use the words of an old maid), an embrace was inevitable. He pressed her cherry ripe lips again and again, which he felt or else fancied, was slightly returned; at the same time declared his love in the most fond and endearing language he was possessed of. Thus they remained: he with his arm clasped round her waist; she, with both hands on his manly stalwart shoulder, looking up to him so happily and lovingly. At that moment he would have risked any danger for her sake, for he knew within himself she had given him her all; the most minute part of her pure innocent heart was his,—it beat for him and him alone.

Had we our own will, we would gladly leave them thus, and not disturb the happy couple, but let them enjoy their first bliss of happiness; yet we are sorry to say there was an eaves-dropper close at hand, who heard every word that was uttered through the key hole, it was the "vidder," who, seeing the grand climax over, and feeling glad that her manœuvring had succeeded even beyond her most sanguine expectations, threw the door wide open, and stood with her plump well-shaped figure in the blank space, looking very much like a full-length portrait in a large frame. She had composed her intellectual features admirably, and with well-feigned astonishment and severity depicted thereon, exclaimed, "Well, this is nice behaviour, certainly. So all this time, these kind and frequent visits of late were

not intended for me at all, and I have been made a gooseberry of,—that is rich indeed.”

The young lady at the first slam of the door certainly started, and moved a little from her partner; but it was only momentary. The slight crimson blush of shyness which suddenly came over her exquisite and lovely countenance changed to a still deeper rich colour of pride, as she stood there supported by the one she had herself chosen.

The “vidder” continued her complimentary remarks, by telling them both to sit down like rational beings, she herself setting the example; and looking at them in a very sly manner, with a slight mischievous twinkle in her eyes, musingly said, “Well, what will *he* say to it, I wonder? Let us put our heads together, and hold a short confab over the state of affairs. Faith, you’ve got yourselves into a nice *pickle o’cabbage*, and myself with you. All the blame, if there is any, will be placed at my door.”

After going over all the pros and cons, the conclusion came to was, they were deep—very deep—in love with each other, and that there was no harm in it, providing her papa was a consenting party; and Harry Acquilier was to ask permission the very first and most fitting opportunity, which latter performance he thought the most disagreeable of all. From the little knowledge he had of old Rennoldson (having been treated by that worthy, when making his very few visits to his house, in a very off-hand, arms-length kind of manner), he imagined there would be much difficulty. However, the day of reckoning, he thought, must come some time or other, and it was far from a pleasant occurrence to look forward to. If the truth was known, he did not feel that confidence which he could wish, as sundry misgivings

would come across his mind occasionally, notwithstanding the perfect command he had over himself,—a very necessary acquirement for one in his position, as he who loses control over himself has no right to command others. This rule always stands good.

At last the day was fixed when he should pay old Rennoldson a visit. He had read up nicely for the occasion, and what he didn't know the "vidder" could tell him. The old gentleman's ways, temper, love of money—all were canvassed. Everything that could be devised to win success was done: not a stone was left unturned. And the last piece of advice he received from his *chère amie* was, not by any means to quarrel with papa; and from the "vidder," to "go in and win."

The momentous time arrived; and if any one had taken the trouble to have perched themselves opposite old Rennoldson's house on a certain day in October, 1854, they would have perceived a window curtain occasionally thrust aside, and a very pretty pair of eyes looking at short intervals up and down the street, and as suddenly removed again. Whilst the inquisitor was wondering in his mind what it could be for, if they could read human nature, or had as much knowledge of mathematics in explaining how many blue beans make five, the problem would have been solved at once, on seeing a young man, with anxious look, of about twenty-eight, arrive and ring at the door. He walked with a staid firm step; but a close observer could detect a slight nervous twitch in his countenance at times, which gave some idea of what was passing within. Altogether there was a look of care on his bronzed healthy face, do what he would to prevent it.

At last the door was opened by a neat trim laughing-eyed servant girl, who, when she was asked if her master

was within, looked embarrassed, coloured up, and answered, "Yes, sir;" and then softly said, with a half mischievous look, "Miss Annie's up stairs."

The latter information told him which way the wind blew. So having touched her playfully under the chin, for the purpose of gaining her good graces, and promised her some ribbons for her bonnet some day or other, he handed his card, and was the next moment ushered into the august presence of old Rennoldson, where we will be so unmannerly as to shut the door on him for a minute or two, and follow the servant girl, although not quite so fast, for she tripped up the stairs three at a time, and rushed into the presence of her "missus" as much excited as if she was an interested party.

"Oh! Miss Annie, he is come; and I do declare he's looking downright 'ansome. Sich a fine tall young man; his eyes too were shining so bright, so piercing like, and when he spoke, his teeth!! Directly he said a few words to me, my 'art was in a perfect flutter, for his voice was as sweet as honey, so pleasing; and altogether I never seed the like 'afore."

"Why, you silly girl, what has come over you? I shall be jealous if you go on that way."

"It's no use your trying to scold me, Miss Annie, for you don't look at all angered; just look in the glass now, for you are looking as pleased as Punch. Ah, deary me!" continued the girl, casting up her eyes with a sigh, "I wonder what this love is they talk so much about; but there, if I did love any young man, and I know'd that he loved me," at the same time stealing a sly glance at the glass, "yes, I'd go through fire and water for him. Not all the fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, or great-great-grandfathers should prevent my having him;

because," argued the girl, "the young man marries *me*, he doesn't marry *them*. But there, it's just like those old fogies; they won't let a poor maiden do as she likes."

What the abigail said did not all seem to annoy her young mistress, which the former knew very well, and so they continued. The tap under the chin had done its work.

In the midst of this pleasant conversation, they were both disturbed by hearing rather loud voices below, and the young lady's father calling her down, which she immediately set about doing; but not before the girl had given her a tap on the back as a little encouragement, telling her, in a firm voice, "to be sure and have her way, for *he* was worth it," which latter sentence appeared to be running in her mind when she entered her father's presence.

But we are going on too fast: let us see what Harry Acquilier's reception was. On entering the room, he perceived the old gentleman sitting on an easy chair, close to the fire. A little table was on his right, and on it were three decanters containing spirits of different colours, which he had evidently been helping himself to a little; for a tumbler partly emptied was on the mantel-piece, with the sugar basin, and a nicely-polished little copper kettle on the hob, singing away quite merrily. He had a newspaper before him, and so intent was he with it, that he did not make any attempt to take the slightest notice of his visitor, but proceeded, reading to himself for some time, evidently much interested in the subject before him. At last, having finished the paragraph, he let the newspaper fall down before him, and the spectacles he had on dropped on his well-formed nose. He then perceived, for the first time, he was not alone.

"I really beg pardon," was his first exclamation. "I hope I have not detained you long? You must have thought me exceedingly rude; but the fact of the matter is, when I take up a paper now-a-days I feel so interested in the accounts from the seat of war, that I am most decidedly absent. I was at that moment reading about the allied fleets conveying our brave soldiers from Varna to the battle field of Alma. What a magnificent sight it must have been. I see the Merchant Transports were actually formed into divisions, and proceeded in line with a Transport Commodore to direct their signals. By the by you are a sailor, are you not, Mr. Acquier?"

"I am, sir," was the reply.

"Then, how is it you are not up there? I should fancy any young man of spirit would like to be present taking a part, especially at a time like this, when such soul-stirring deeds are enacted, such bravery displayed for the old country. You may depend on it," continued the patriotic old gentleman, "you will be sorry for it yet, particularly so when the *Medals* are distributed."

"Pardon, sir; I am in the *Mercantile Marine*, and in that branch of the profession, do what they may, there will be nothing to show for it years hence; nothing to hand down to their children as an heir-loom."

"Why, you will be surprised when I tell you, at this present moment, the commanders and officers of those stupendous and magnificent steam-ships, which are second to none afloat, and who convey her Majesty's mails to every clime, have no rank beyond that of a common coasting pilot or master, and only wear a uniform on sufferance, although the latter is essential to discipline, as distinguishing them from the crowd of passengers; and, strange to say, those very commanders preside at their own tables, and take precedence of the highest mili-

tary officer on board. Not that they would wish to ape the navy; but let the government give them a uniform of their own, and if a medal is issued to those who have been employed in the Transport Service, let it state on that medal, even if is a tin one, the locality, or particular war they were employed about.

"It would make them feel a greater pride in their profession, and stimulate them to be more energetic, if possible, for the future."

"Come, come," interrupted old Rennoldson, "I had no intention of having a long argument on the subject; but I feel convinced, if the Transports do their work properly, their services are sure to be recognised by the powers that be. At all events, I hope our fine fellows up there will give the Russians as good a licking as they deserve. But take a glass of something to drink: here's a tumbler; what shall it be? I never take much myself, for it is exceedingly strong."

"Thank you, I'll take a little *matrimony*," was the quick reply, at the same time pouring the two liquids (rum and gin), which formed that west-country beverage, out into his glass, with all due regard to the hint given him of not taking much. After diluting it with a little water, he was about to drink, when the old gentleman arose and said, "I'll propose a toast: here's 'Success to the Russian war,' coupled with our hopes and wishes of this day."

Having gulped down every drop to this (to him) very appropriate toast, and seeing his host looking cheerful and in good humour, Harry thought this an excellent opportunity for pressing his suit; so, without more ado, he answered, "Yes, sir, I have every reason to drink that toast with pleasure, even if—"

"Every lover of his country would," was the interrupted reply.

"Even, I was about to say," continued the young man, "if what we have been talking about was the only wish uppermost in my mind. But it is not, sir: I have one much more at heart than that, which, if I succeed in, will make me the happiest man in the whole wide world; if, on the contrary, the most miserable. In a word, sir, it is on that subject I paid you this visit, and you have the power of deciding my fate.

"I will not detain you by detailing a long rigmarole, such as 'unvarnished tale,' 'blighted affections,' &c.; but will come to the point at once by telling you, sir, in a straightforward manner, that I love your daughter, and hope you will not think it too great a presumption on my part if I say I think it is reciprocated; and should you give your consent to our happy union, it shall be my greatest study to make her path in this world smooth, so that she may glide down the vale of life happily and contentedly."

The old gentleman, all this time, never took his sharp grey eyes off his visitor, and appeared almost beside himself with rage, and essayed several times to give vent to it, but the words seemed to choke themselves as they arose in his throat.

"And, in conclusion," continued he, "I want no money with her, as, what with the profession I am in, and a little property of my own, we could rub along very comfortably. It is true I have another step to get yet, which, from my long servitude in my present position, I hope soon to—"

"Or, in other words," exclaimed the old gentleman, for he could not contain himself any longer, "you have come here a *catawalloping* after my daughter, in the hopes of getting the little money I am possessed of, you impudent rascal. And to tell me, without a blush on your brazen face, that it is re-ci-pro-ca-ted! but stop, I'll

soon put a stop to that," opened the door and called his daughter, telling her to come down directly.

When Annie Rennoldson entered the parlour, a single glance told her too truly how matters stood. Both were on their legs, her father striding up and down the room at the rate of (to use a nautical term) eight knots an hour, looking anything but pleasant; the other with hat in hand, ready for an immediate departure, if it should prove necessary.

On turning short round, old Rennoldson met the affectionate but steady gaze of his daughter; and he could not help noticing, even at that moment, that she looked more like her poor-departed mother, whom he had loved and cherished so much, than ever she did before. He had been a widower now upwards of two years or more. His daughter appeared certainly a little pale, but there was a look of determination in that bright clear eye, which *cowed* him for the moment: it looked as if *she*, in all her youth and beauty, were looking through her daughter's eyes; but on her shaking hands with the young man, and saying at the same time, in a clear silvery voice, "Did you want me, papa?" he recovered himself, and answered gruffly, "Yes, I do. This Mr. Acquilier [pointing with his hand towards the individual so named] has the impertinence, in fact the audacity, to tell me that he—he—loves you, and that it is returned. I want you to inform him at once, and in my presence, that it is no such thing;" and losing all control over himself, finished the sentence at the top of his voice, with a thump on the table, by saying, "Tell him, it is a lie."

"My dear papa," was the quick but soothing answer, "pray, do not put yourself in such a fearful passion. I confess Mr. Acquilier is not indifferent to me; but

Henry—ah—he does not want to take me away from you ; and I am sure, papa, you will soon like him so much.”

“That is quite enough—you can retire,” was the interrupted rejoinder, beckoning his daughter hurriedly to the door, who, after giving a look full of meaning to her lover, did as she was desired.

They were both again alone ; the silence was broken by the elder, who said, “Look here, sir, a word with you, once for all. Let me tell you, I think your conduct has been most disgraceful : you are worse than a pirate-smuggler ; you have acted the part of a vagabond ; you have gained the affections of my daughter by stealth ; and as sure as there is a God in heaven, I’ll wring it out of her, root and branch.”

“Hold, for pity’ sake, hold !” cried the young man, much agitated.

“Don’t talk to me about pity : think on the dark stormy night, when you are at sea, with the elements raging wildly around you, and cold grim death, with all its horrors, staring you gloomily in the face ; think, I say, think, at that moment, of the misery you have brought upon a poor old man, whose only care left him this side of the grave was the happiness of his only child—his daughter. Be off, Sir, and never darken my door again ; for rest assured I would as soon follow her to her last resting place, as to see her united to a spendthrift.”

Seeing it was no use attempting to argue the point with a man in his excited state of mind, Acquilier simply said (having perfect command over himself in the meantime), “Recollect, I have asked you in a straightforward manner, with every respect due to you as her father, for the hand of your daughter, knowing

full well that I have the heart already. In return you have not only refused me, but grossly insulted me. You have called me by names no other man on earth dare do, but let that pass; and even at this eleventh hour I ask you once more, and caution you to be careful how you trifle with your daughter's happiness. Should any harm happen to her, blame only yourself. Give me the slightest chance of hope, and I will go away contented, blessing you for that same."

Having said thus much, he made a movement towards the door, when the old miser bethought himself how he could manage so as to effect a parting between the two, knowing full well that was a great object for the end he had in view. So, without a moment's hesitation, he answered, "The only hope I hold out to you is, that when you are at the *top* of your profession, and in possession of a Crimean Transport *Medal*, then, and only then, can you ever think of being my son-in-law. So the best advice I can give you is, to leave this as soon as possible, apply for a ship at once so as to place yourself again on active service. I wish you ah—a very good day."

He had been bowed out, for the door was slammed against him, and was once more in the public streets. So after taking a bird's-eye view of the exterior, for reasons best known to himself, wended his way back from whence he came.—He had failed.

We shall not attempt to chronicle every meeting that took place after that, but certain it is they were many, notwithstanding the old gentleman's watchfulness, and he was pretty sharp on the alert. But what will not lovers do if they feel so inclined? However, in this case the "vidder" should have her share of the credit; for that kind-hearted person schemed and contrived all

manner of ways in furtherance of their happiness, as she termed it. If old Rennoldson had only known how he had been doubled by this meek quiet-looking individual, he would have stared; for she proved the old saying to be correct which says, that "a woman is a match for a man any day."

As we said before, they met often; and two or three months passed quickly away. Neither could bear the idea of parting, and when it entered for a moment into their thoughts, it was driven as quickly as possible away like an unwelcome visitor, and it only tended to make their present moments more precious to each other. But the "course of true love never did run smooth," and we should be deviating from the truth, if we said this was an exception to the general rule; for as time flew by, with all its hopes and pleasures, the letter we have copied a few chapters back came, and told him that he must go once more afloat.

The parting has already been described at the eleventh hour. Amidst the hurry and excitement of leaving, he had come to the rather sudden determination of shaking off his fetters, seeing so many obstacles in his way, and adopting the precautions of not giving his whereabouts, or name of the ship he was likely to join, so as to prevent any communication reaching him, thinking that absence and time would accomplish the rest.

We do not intend passing any severe strictures on the conduct of Harry Acquilier, in leaving a young girl whose affections he had won, and then so suddenly coming to the determination of deserting her. If "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," how it must have been exemplified in his case, for the prospect held out to him was very black and dreary indeed.

If he looked to his own friends, he was quite sure both

his father and mother would have been much against his marrying till he had got to the top of his profession ; and even then, Annie Rennoldson was not the one they would have chosen, for, like most fathers and mothers, they had another in their mind's eye, which he knew well enough, although the delicate topic was never once broached by them. The very knowledge that, perhaps, some day or other he should be the cause of great disappointment to his parents, was a matter of much grief to him ; for with all his faults he held them in great veneration, and truly loved both his father and mother.

On the other hand, his conscience told him he had acted uprightly towards her, with regard to his intentions being "honourable," and had conformed to those rules and usages which are necessary in England, previous to his being able to make her his wife. In all and everything connected with that young lady, he had been particularly unfortunate ; for if he looked to the right or to the left, the way became obscured with numerous difficulties, and insurmountable obstacles arose, like so many vast pyramids, placed there on purpose to retard him in his progress. Straight before him—but a long, long way off—was a faint *glimmer of hope*, held out by old Rennoldson's words, "Another step in the way of promotion, then the Transport Medal," and he would be accepted as the old miser's son-in-law.

The letter he had received summoning him away made him soon make up his mind, in coming to the conclusion that the faint streak of light—the glimmer of hope, *straight a-head*—was the only beacon that guided him as to the future, and that it must be his ruling star.

In the mean time, he had come to the determination, in leaving (lest he might be unsuccessful), of holding out

no hopes to her, whom he loved dearer than life itself; trusting that, if fortune turned against him, she, at least, would be at liberty, if she so pleased, in uniting herself to some one who was in better circumstances than himself; which will account, in some measure, for his reasons for trying to forget her.

Having thus at last come to a satisfactory conclusion with regard to his conduct henceforth, Harry could do nothing more then, than leave it in the hands of Him who ordaineth all things well.

CHAPTER XI.

“WELL, Cousins, having arrived at Malta, and parted with my two travelling friends,—the old Judge and Doctor,—I proceeded on shore, and took up my quarters at the Hotel Imperiale, to await the arrival of some steamer going to Constantinople.

“It happened to be the Carnival week there: such dancing, rejoicing, masquerading, and bands of music parading the streets. All business appeared to be at a stand still, with the exception of the different cafés, and opera, which places were well attended, and seemed to be almost coining money.

“After remaining at Malta about a week, one of the small Liverpool steamers, ‘regular traders,’ arrived, *en route* to the Turkish waters; and on a beautiful moonlight night, or rather during the small hours in the morning, my friends (some shipmates whom I had sailed with in India, and who had been dining with me,

their ships happening to be in harbour at the time), accompanied me on board. Never shall I forget, after we had pushed off from shore in one of the small Maltese wherries, the beautiful effect of a song that was sung by one of them: it was 'When first I met sweet Peggy.' It happened to be a fine clear night; the numerous stars and planets were shining and twinkling out brightly and cheerfully; the heavens above were studded with them, with here and there a few detached pieces of Italian sky. It was a perfect calm, for not a breath of wind was there to disturb the smooth glassy-like water underneath; and as the notes issued forth plaintively and feelingly, not a word was spoken, not the slightest rustle; you could hear a pin drop; the only noise made was the occasional splash of the oars, which threw up a small quantity of phosphorescent matter, sparkling like as many diamonds when exposed to the silvery rays of the moon. The two Maltese boatmen, with their dark tanned faces and gaily coloured habiliments, seemed to be inspired the same as ourselves, for their implements of propulsion were dropped into the water as easily and quietly as possible.

"Within sight and hail were about fifteen or twenty large steam transports, each having on board troops of different nations, English, French, and Sardinians; and the stillness of the night was sometimes broken by the sentries, with their 'All's well,' spoken in their respective languages. Each of us was apparently enjoying his own thoughts: one thinking of his sweet 'Peggy' at home—thoughts which the song, in all likelihood, had conjured up; another, of those poor soldiers huddled up so close together on board the various Transports, for a greater part of them appeared to be sleeping on deck, as the heat must have been very great below.

"What a true saying that is which says, 'One half the world does not know how the other half live:' for look at those poor soldiers going to a far-off land to fight their country's battle, how many, think you, will ever return back to their native land? I am afraid to answer.

"Well might we say, 'From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from sudden death: good Lord, deliver us;' for they would have to contend against all. Some of them, in all probability, left aged parents behind, who never expected to meet again this side of the grave; others, sweethearts; aye, and a few wives! Dream on, noble fellows: the morrow will come soon enough; and the quietness that reigns now is only the calm which precedes a storm.

"The wherry having grazed quietly up alongside the steamer I was about to take passage in, and the song being finished, I bade my late *chummies* good-bye, scaled the ship's side, and having roused the watchman out of his slumbers, procured a berth, and was soon fast asleep, with 'sweet Peggy' still ringing in my ears.

"The next day, we left the grand harbour of Valetta, and in due course of time made and passed the southern extreme of Greece. At Cape St. Angelo, on the turning corner, there lives a hermit, in a cave on the top of a very steep cliff or rock, which runs up almost perpendicularly from the sea; and during the Russian war, it was anything but a secluded and quiet retreat, as he became so well known, having resided there for many years; and that being the great thoroughfare for ships going through the Archipelago, every one made a practice of paying him some little respect, by hoisting their national flag when he made his appearance. Guns have often

been fired to attract his attention, should he not be visible. What could he have thought at seeing so many vessels passing with troops? and if it were possible, for him to keep an account of the number that passed up and those that returned back, what a difference would he have found! Well might he have rejoiced at having kept away from the haunts of his own species.

"Ancient Athens was neared and passed; the pretty island of Zea, with its nice village on the summit, surrounded with richly cultivated gardens. That was the place Her Majesty's ship Royal Albert had to make for, to prevent her sinking, having sprung a leak, and a very great one too, all her pumps in full force not being sufficient to keep the water under. In this dilemma, with very little time to think about it, she had to be beached, which having been done in the softest place they could find in the hurry of the moment, an artificial breakwater was erected outside of her for protection against the surf; the guns were landed; and in an incredible short space of time the leak was stopped, armament shipped again, breakwater removed, and this noble line-of-battle ship, an emblem of her nation's greatness, once more afloat, and ready either to protect her own shores, if necessary, or the weak from the aggressor.

"Well might England be proud of her sailors. It is in such cases of emergency and danger that the British mariner shines out in his true colours! During the late war, they proved themselves not to have deteriorated since the glorious days of Nelson. It was not for want of volunteering that they did not go into Sebastopol; the great difficulty was to prevent them from going too close, instanced in many cases, and one which is too well known to be forgotten soon by Englishmen. Captain Lyons, in the *Miranda*, who having just returned from

the Sea of Azoff, where he had held the chief command, and performed deeds of valour and gallantry outvying, if possible, his brave and noble father at Sebastopol, whilst reconnoitring about that harbour, a fatal shot from one of the batteries struck him down, and by that single blow England was deprived of one of her best defenders and truest sons.

"The island of Mytelene and Tenedos were soon passed, inside the latter of which were to be seen the ruins of Troy ; up through the Dardanelles, which Byron swam across ; Gallipoli, where our troops first landed ; through the Sea of Marmora ; and then dull, gloomy, melancholy Scutari hove in sight, with its drooping death-like cypress trees around it. How many are there who will recollect that dreaded edifice to their last day ! They have good cause ; for the very name is engraven on many a poor heart. What misery and suffering have been endured there ! What has become of the thousands who entered the door alive, but never returned without again ? Go behind those cypress trees : the newly turned mounds of earth will tell you.

"Many is the time, Jenny, I have seen that building since ; and no matter what sort of spirits I have been in, the first glance has sent a sickening thrill into the very core of my heart. The small light-hearted boy has checked his unruly laugh, and the weather-beaten old tar has for a time left off his jokes, as they caught sight of that mournful spot.

"Having rounded Seraglio Point, we cast anchor in the Golden Horn.

"Who can forget Constantinople at that period ? for as far as the eye could reach, up and down the Bosphorus, above bridges, was thronged with large steam Transports, nine out of ten of which were flying the flag that has

'braved a thousand years, the battle and the breeze.' Who could look at that magnificent fleet without feeling proud of his country? for they formed *a part only* of ENGLAND'S MERCANTILE NAVY, which had conveyed the whole of her own army, with a greater part of the French and Sardinians, to the Crimea. * * * * *

"On making inquiries, I found my ship was in the Black Sea; and as the Company's steam-ship S—— a was about to start for that place the next day, I took passage in her, and proceeded up the Bosphorus.

"What a treat it would be for any one who had been cooped up in such a place as Aden, to have had a look all at once at the beautiful landscapes, villages, and palaces on the banks on that inlet to the Black Sea! How it would have done their eyes good! for it certainly looked a perfect paradise.

"We soon passed through; and having got the forts of Europe and Asia on our quarter, the old Captain (or Commodore, as he is generally called) ventured down from his elevated post, the bridge, where he had been 'conning' the ship.

"He was about the brightest specimen of an old salt of the ancient school I ever saw. His age was between sixty and seventy; although when asked, for the purpose of entering it in the ship's articles, he would always refer them to the last one, at the same time telling them to put him down a year younger, and at that particular period was exactly forty-five, as per ship's articles. No matter what sea was rolling, he had always his sea legs. No person had ever seen him totter, although report did say he was a *leetle* fond of his *tot* (*quot homines, tot sententiæ*), and that the drop he had a partiality for was cream to his tea, milk to his coffee, and seasoning to his soup.

"I should like very much to know," interrupted Ned

laughing, "the man (barring his being a tee-totaller) that is not fond of his glass. You and I, Harry, are not immaculate on that score, I can answer for."

"Ditto," chimed in Jenny, with a sly look at the pair that would seem to portend much or nothing at all, just as it took. "But proceed," exclaimed that young lady.

"Some stories were told about him with regard to this little weakness," continued Acquilier, "one of which I will, with your permission, relate as I had it word for word, but cannot, as a matter of course, vouch for the accuracy of the same."

"Go on, we will make all due allowances," said Ned.

"It was this :—A ship, under the command of the jolly old Commodore, happened to be at anchor in Trebizond on a Christmas day a few years since ; and everything being snug and comfortable, the crew was allowed, according to custom, an extra allowance to their usual dinner, with some little addition to their quantum of grog, so that they might be able to make it a day of rejoicing. All went on well and enjoyed themselves to their hearts' content during the day, but when evening arrived it became evident that *Chips* had had a glass too much, which his chummy, the boatswain, accounted for by saying, he would persist in holding up his glass and drinking his favourite toast too often, which happened to be as follows,—'If this 'ere glass of rum 's a ghost, may the same often appear to me.' At last this worthy arrived at a certain pitch in his glasses which made him good tempered, with a longing to be at peace with all mankind. He had a regular scale, and had it been a drop over or under it would have been different. The old fellow's temper was as much regulated by the quantity of *tots* he imbibed as the sympesometer is by the thermometer—the slightest change or deviation made a dif-

ference. First and foremost, his conscience told him he did not stand A 1 with the skipper, for the simple reason that he required being kept in his proper place, as he was one of those who, if given an inch, would take an ell. [There are many like *Chips* in this world.] A moment's reflection was enough: he would go aft and square accounts; so, having crawled to the break of the quarter deck as best he could, he espied his much-respected commander seated down in an easy chair. He sidled up to him, in a kind of shuffling crab-like manner, to prevent his irregular steps from being detected. The first thing he did was to grasp his 'flipper,' as he called it, and then to deliver himself of the following:—'Capen Jawdy [hic-hic-cup], I likes ye—ye knows I does [hic]; I'd sail all the [hiccup] world over with ye [hic], Capen Jawdy; but [hiccup] there is a time [hic] that I doesn't [hiccup] likes ye, and [hic] that is when you drinks that 'ere strong [hiccup, hiccup] coffee; 'cause then you are so hawfully [hiccup] 'trairey.'

"Now, this was a breach of that strict discipline for which the old Commodore was most deservedly noted, backed as he was by the necessary powers from Leadenhall-street, in the shape of divers circulars and regulations, which, when properly attended to, was most conducive at all times to comfort on board ship. But instead of taking notice of *Chips's* great liberty and unwarrantable familiarity, he quietly told him to go for'a'd, having very considerably taken into account the particular day of the season, Christmas coming only once a year, as also the extra allowance that had been consequently allotted him on that occasion. It was a good joke for the officers, who were soon round their worthy Commander, and only too glad to think it had been treated so good humouredly. *Chips*, on his way for'a'd, mistook his distance, for early

the next morning he was found fast asleep in the lee scuppers: so much for the Commodore's forbearance.

"Next to himself, he loved his ship; and it nearly broke the old man's heart when he first heard she was taken up as a Transport for conveying cavalry, which the following yarn, that somehow or the other got about, will testify.

"It was said, after the memorable battle of Alma, a gallant colonel, whom, for convenience sake, we will call Lord George, visited the ship which brought him, with his fine regiment, out from England, and which happened to be old Jawdy's. Whilst remarking to the old skipper a few little incidents connected with their trip out, the colonel exclaimed, in a sudden burst of feeling which did him honour, and pointing to the late field of strife, 'Ah, Commodore, how many of those brave noble men, that left England with us, are there in those plains, eating the dust, poor fellows!'

"'Yes, your ludship,' was the sublime reply; 'and I say, your ludship, look at that 'ere to'gallant bulwark, eat away to a jelly by those confounded hosses. This 'ere was a new ship twelve months ago; howmsoever, it isn't my fault.' And whilst a tear trickled down over the weather-beaten face of the old salt, his lordship turned sharp round, this latter misfortune being evidently too much for him.

"But putting all his little faults aside, when he had troops on board, the old skipper always endeavoured to make them happy and comfortable; and the 'sodgers,' as he called them, appeared to appreciate it, for on the termination of their voyage, the officers of Lord George's regiment made him a handsome present of a beautiful gold snuff box, with their names and a suitable inscription engraved on the lid of the same, and which the old Commodore is so very proud of that he takes every oppor-

tunity of showing it, at the same time telling his friends that he took to the Crimea, in his ship alone, *three fourths* of the British army and *one fourth* of the French, all of which, however strange it may sound, is literally true, which he explains in this fashion :—

“ British : the 4th Light *Dragons*, the 4th Heavy *Dragons*, and the 4th regiment of Fus.

“ French : the 4th *Chasseurs d'Afrique*.

“ I must apologise to you both for having gone a little aside in giving such a lengthened description of the old Commodore. But he is such an original and eccentric character, that I could not forbear the temptation ; and every one who was up in the Black Sea knew him as well as his ship, for he would persist in flying his piece of red bunting at the main. * * * * *

“ Having coasted it along the European shore all night, we arrived at the little Turkish port of Bourgas, where the numerous Transports were ordered to assemble, for the purpose of providing themselves with fodder for Omer Pacha's cavalry horses that they were to transport from Sizabole to Eupatoria. After remaining there a day or two, my ship the C——o came in.

“ But before I proceed further, I will, with your kind permission, give some little account of her doings, as also a few words about those belonging to her, commencing first of course with her commander, who was well known in the Crimea, and went by the *soubriquet* of ‘ Sir Robert,’ an energetic clever man.

“ In this war he was a perfect fanatic, having any amount of daring and fearlessness, being always ready to do that which he was ordered. Once or twice he had volunteered to the Admiral to make a dash into Sebastopol harbour, and break the barrier. Had he gained permission, there is not the shadow of a doubt but that

he would have succeeded, and just as certain procured instant death to himself and crew, with destruction to his magnificent vessel: but the object would have been gained. In all probability, he imagined the same charm would hang over him as it did to those who were in the little pilot steamer which went in at the bombardment before the *Agamemnon*, giving her soundings, every two or three minutes, just as coolly and regularly as if she was proceeding up some English river on a pic-nic excursion, notwithstanding the perfect shower of shot, grape, and canister, with which she was so thickly enveloped.

"In landing troops, Sir Robert always brought his ship the closest to the shore, within her own draught of water, so as to give them as little trouble as possible in disembarking. He appeared to think a great deal depended on himself whether the war was to come to a successful issue or not. That particular service in which he was engaged, was done by him well and cheerfully. No man could think or care more for our poor sailors and soldiers than he did, and on many occasions he had displayed great zeal and forethought for the common welfare; one or two instances of which I will by and by mention, and can vouch for their accuracy.

"At the very outbreak of the war with Russia, he had been sent to Plymouth to convey the —— Regiment of the line to the Crimea, and after the various detentions on their way in touching at and disembarking them on the sickly shores of the Bosphorus, then the round-about way to Varna, crossed over with the combined fleet in the fourth division to the Crimea, and landed them at Calamita Bay, about two miles to the northward of the French army.

"During their long and tedious voyage out, the soldiers and sailors had fraternised much, and every one on board

belonging to that ship felt a particular interest in them. *It was their regiment*, whom they wished well in every sense of the term ; consequently, when the ever memorable battle of Alma was fought, a week after, there was not a little difficulty in restraining those tars from going on shore, and partaking the dangers of their late comrades. As it was, a dozen strong athletic fellows were chosen, who, with their intrepid commander, accompanied by his surgeon and purser, followed in the wake of that brave army, the latter trio heavily laden, not with 'loot,' but with medical comforts ; and many a poor fellow, as he limped back, wounded and weak from loss of blood, received help from them ; for whilst the 'medico' staunches his wound, another would give him a drain from the flask, which set him up well enough to proceed back to the shipping.

"Nor were those 'Jacks' behind in their work of mercy ; for notwithstanding the interference of double their number of Cossacks, who surprised them on the road, *six of their maimed countrymen were brought safely down to the boat*, and taken on board, where their wounds were attended to in common with the rest of the sick ; for Sir Robert's officers and remainder of crew had nobly done their part in his absence in receiving the wounded, as well as attending to their wants ; and Sir Robert's ship was actually the first that arrived at Scutari, having on board upwards of seven hundred English and one hundred Russians, friends and foes all huddled together indiscriminately, some with broken legs and arms, others with frightful gunshot wounds. How many surgeons, think you, were in attendance on that unfortunate and ghastly multitude ? Two naval, one army, and the ship's doctor ! To hear the latter tell the tale of suffering was enough to make one's hair stand on end : how that after

he had performed amputation on one, a dozen more would cry out, in the most heart-rending tones, 'Oh, dear doctor, have pity on me, and take off my leg, or arm, or attend to my wound quickly, lest I bleed to death.'

"Such were the cries which assailed him on that fearful night. There were seven of those unfortunate soldiers lying in a row, that had undergone the fearful and sickly operation of amputation ;' and several with the tourniquet applied to their limbs, to prevent them from bleeding to death. Do you think either of these professional men could take any rest that night? No, to their credit be it said ; and it was 'Cut, cut, cut !' till the skylight was more like a butcher's shop than anything else. All that ship's company were up that night, and whilst an officer—or rather, I should say, a mate—of the vessel was holding up the head of some poor fellow, saying some soothing words during the time, the surgeon was performing some operation on him. A sailor might be seen placing a pillow carefully under the shattered leg or arm of those who had not the strength to do it themselves, for the purpose of giving some little relief to their poor helpless limbs. Many were the thanks those fine fellows poured forth, some only in a whisper, which entered deep into the hearts of those who heard them. One Irishman, in particular ; he had two bones broken, and in consequence, was perfectly helpless. One of the Jacks was attending him, just as if he had been a child, and poor Paddy's gratitude knew no bounds. 'Och, ma darlint, an' ye are ma raal frind, to attind to a critter what was in distress. It's Biddy that 'ud hug you, an' give ye gould to ate and dhrink, if she knew it.'

"Such was a slight specimen of the language made use of by the wounded soldiers on their way from the

field of battle to Scutari Hospital, to express gratitude for kindness shown them in their hour of trouble.

“Nor were those professional men behind in their attention. There was no difference: no false pride between them, although they were in different services, and held different positions. All were possessed of the same kind of diploma, had passed the same strict examination,* and were there doing the *very same work*; and yet, whilst those three belonging to the two services have at present what a man prizes more than filthy lucre, a *Medal*, the civilian, as I am obliged to term him, has none. *Why this difference?* * * * *

“Sir Robert’s ship had, for some cause or other, always been kept in the Black Sea, never once returning to England; and, notwithstanding the many hardships and exposures (for half of that ship’s crew were up and away in boats every night whilst in port), they stuck to and did their work cheerfully. Many a time when coal-ing, watering, or storing their ship, on coming off in their boats, their clothes drenched through, and bitterly cold, did they raise the cry of ‘Hurrah, my dandies!—three cheers for self-reliance and the ould country.’ This was in allusion to a speech that was made by their commander on leaving Plymouth, who had addressed a few suitable words to them on the occasion, reminding them that their country was engaged in a war, and notwithstanding they were in the *Mercantile Marine*, it was their duty to do all that laid in their power, in order to bring it to a successful termination. He then took off his cap, and bid them give ‘Three hearty cheers for self-reliance and the ould country,’ at the same time ordering the boatswain to pipe to ‘grog-o’ as a clincher to the compact; and ever

* The surgeon of the Mercantile Marine has to pass an examination before the Medical Director General of the Royal Navy, the same as an assistant surgeon of Her Majesty’s Service.

afterwards, no matter how disheartening the moment, that cry was always responded to. It was their rallying signal, for when they were asked, would they go in at the bombardment of Sevastopol? threw their caps in the air, and answered with their usual three cheers; consequently, the C——o having been previously prepared by placing quantities of old sails and awnings over her side, in order to protect the boilers from the shot, was there at that stupendous cannonading match, and within range, READY, and only too willing to render any service required of her, either to tow a disabled man-of-war out of danger, or one into action. And this was quite voluntary on their part. There were no bright visionary hopes of promotion, or having the name of their vessel placed in large letters on the margin of the Admiral's despatch, before their eyes; but simply a *spontaneous act of zeal for the honour and glory of dear old England*—the land of their wives and sweethearts.

“The C——o was also at Balaklava about a week or ten days after the bombardment of Sevastopol, when the Russians attacked the allied defences in rear of the first-mentioned place, and succeeded in holding the same, to the great risk and danger of the numerous shipping there. Sir Robert, with the other commanders, were in no ways behindhand in preparing for their reception; and every suggestion made by the naval authorities was strictly attended to. After the battle of Inkerman was fought, on the never-to-be-forgotten 5th of November,—when the enemy opened the ball by attacking the extreme right of the English army, and getting jolly well licked for their pains, showing them that *Britons by themselves can do their work*,—the wounded, or rather a part of them, was taken over in Sir Robert's ship in that affray also; in all, his ship had crossed the Euxine

four times with sick and wounded to Scutari Hospital, where once or twice the C——o's crew had to go on shore and perform burial duty.

"Was there no danger, any one might reasonably ask, in mixing up with so much mortality? Most assuredly there was. And might not such services receive some slight acknowledgment?—but *tout se fait par comperage*, as the old proverb tells us. All that the commanders of those Transports thought of was, acting well their part, and, to the best of their ability, satisfying their own consciences that they were doing justice to their country. THIS WAS THEIR PRIDE. The main point at issue, *the success of our arms*, was never lost sight of. Many were the little acts of zeal and forethought done by them; and although trifling in themselves, spoke volumes in their behalf AS A CLASS. As I have before promised, I will give you an instance which, with regard to its accuracy, will invite any one to ask those who belonged to that brave English fleet which was riding out the wintry blasts in the roadstead of Sebastopol during the Christmas '54, when they had nothing to eat but salt junk, whilst scurvey was decimating their number for want of fresh provisions; everything looking dull and cheerless, the very booming of the distant cannon sounding like a death knell.

"No one who was present will forget that dreadful time: it will remain engraven on their memory to their dying day; for they endured more hardships than the people of England imagine. Who brought them a little succour at that momentous period? *A Merchant Transport*. But it shall be told in the words of an eye-witness.

"One morning, low distant cheers were heard coming nearer and nearer, until they reached the ears of the discoloured broken-down sick man, as he lay gasping in

his hospital cot. 'What could it be?' asked every one. A look was sufficient: they were British cheers—there was no mistake about that; and the flag-ship has manned her rigging, and was cheering a large steam Transport that was passing, with her colours gracefully dipped, making her curtsy to the Admiral.

" 'I declare it is Sir Robert,' cries one.

" 'What has he got on his yards?' exclaimed another.

" Up she came, running the gauntlet of the whole fleet, while ship after ship followed suit, manned their rigging, and gave a good hearty cheer, which came from the bottom of their hearts.

" Why was this? what made them cheer that merchant ship? You are probably wishing to know cousins. I will tell you. She had just arrived from Varna, touching on her way at Eupatoria, at which place she was loudly cheered by the ships assembled in that roadstead also. For strung up aloft on her lower yards were *bullocks*; topsail yards, *sheep*; and on her to'gallant yards, *poultry of every kind*. All these good things were bought by Sir Robert and his purser at the first-mentioned port, without any orders to do so, but knowing they were much wanted was simply an *act of zeal, on their part*, for the service they were embarked in.

" The mercenary man might say, 'Oh, they realized a good profit on the transaction.'

" No such thing; the very invoices were handed over as they had received them, and no one on board that ship got more by it, than feeling within their own individual breasts they had done *some little service for their country*.

" Many a poor fellow, almost on his last legs, will remember that cheer given to the Merchant Transport, for they knew it to be a good omen, and that help was at

hand, which consequently raised their drooping spirits: even to those who were enjoying good health, it proved an antidote to that great enemy to health, *gloominess*; for it is Jack's nature to relish a joke, let it come in whatever shape it may."

"I beg pardon for interrupting you," said Jenny; "but has not 'Sir Robert,' as you call him, or any of his zealous crew, a *medal*?"

"Not even a leaden one. But I have finished for this evening: good night."

Reader, let us remind you that our old friend Tom Jones has.

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT with quietness and rest in the sweet and secluded retreat of Cleveland, away from the excitement and bustle of the world, in addition to being under the tender nursing of his cousin Jenny, Harry Acquilier had sufficiently recovered from his late indisposition as to be able to enjoy outdoor amusements, such as shooting, hunting, fishing, and all other kind of athletic exercises that a man of his restless disposition was fond of; long walks of an evening with Jenny, sometimes in old-frequented places—dear homely spots, that brought many welcome recollections and kindred associations back to memory, that had long lain dormant; or at other times paying a visit to some of her friends in the neighbourhood—one, perhaps, who was suffering from sickness, poverty, or some affliction that had made them irritable, and almost tired of this world. In these pleasant but charitable calls, the

two cousins were generally together; for Ned had to look after his farm, and at times visited markets and fairs, consequently his time was, to a certain extent, otherwise taken up.

"Now, this evening," Jenny would say, "I promised to call and see Betty Dingle, your old nurse, Harry: she is not very well, and is getting up in years now."

And when they had reached the pretty little homely cottage, with its clean little garden, covered with flowers, and the lovely moss roses, with honeysuckles and jessamine literally covering its walls, giving an appearance of comfort, cleanliness, and beauty, that contrasted greatly with the smoky dull-looking houses of close confined towns, Jenny would tap gently at the old-fashioned oaken door; and when opened, the inmates would greet them with a hearty "God bless he-e, Miss Jane, and Master 'Arry. To think," the old nurse would say, "of both of he-e coming to see a poor ole lone pair like we so often; and shaking 'ans, too, so famillar like. There, do he-e seat yoursel's."

Then her "ole man," as she called him, would in his turn, say a word or two: "Dearie me, what a great chap you be getting, Master 'Arry;" at the same time scanning the figure of the young man with his heavy grey-looking eyes. "I little thought, when you was first brought here, you'd ever grow to be a man (so clean grown, too); for you was such a small weak delicate baby; and it took—let me see—yes, one year, before you could run away! Wasn't that about the time, mother?"

"Ez, ez!" cried the old dame sighing, with her eyes fixed on vacancy, as if raking up old thoughts; "ez, 'twas two long years before he could walk. How ill his poor dear mother was, with sich a young family! her

was glad enough when I took him from her. And how fond his aunt was of him, too! her was a sweet-tempered lady, an ole maid then, and I do believe doted on the dear little creature as if it was her own. How glad she was when he was first placed in a swing, and although could scarcely walk, held on bravely, crying out joyfully, 'Swing, he hi hoy!' with his bright laughing eyes looking so cheerful and gladsome-like: what a spirit he had! that's what kept him up."

"There, Mrs. Dingle, do stop, and do not praise him so much," interrupted Jenny.

"Ez, fay, you be a fine pair," answered the old woman, with a strong emphasis on the latter word.

This remark sent the blood rushing to Jenny's pretty face in a moment; but recovering herself immediately, and with the view of turning the conversation, she said, "Ask him, Mrs. Dingle, how it was he got kicked by that cavalry horse, up in the Crimea;" and with a sly good-natured look, finished her sentence by saying, "I cannot think how you could have been so stupid, Harry."

"No, I suppose not, cousin Jenny: I ought to have had you there, to take care of me."

"Ah, ah, ah!" roared the old pair; "how funny they be! Dearie me, I felt so pluffy before they came in: now, my ole bones seem young again."

So they would chat on; and after remaining some little time with the old couple, they arose and bade them good night.

In walking back through the cherry gardens, after rather a long pause, Jenny suddenly came to a full stop, and said to her companion, in almost an inaudible whisper, "Do you like pic-nics?"

"Rayther," was the laconic reply.

"Well, then, we are going to have one the day after to-morrow."

"You don't mean that?"

"I do; and what is more, my two brothers are coming down from London, and are expected this evening; and all the people from the north, that is to say, Harewood, Brother Jack, with his odd sayings, and sister Bessy of course (for these two are never parted now); and," continued she, walking on again, "let me see: there are the Nortons, Hewtons, Clamicks, Hollowells, Liphills, Collinses, Trehills, Newparks; oh, and such a number beside! All have received invitations, and will be sure to come; and—and, I had almost forgotten, the two over the water, Outlaw and his sister, whom you are so fond of criticising: what a shame to say her waist is close up under her armpits; and that her voice and manner are exactly like the inimitable Miss Miggs, in Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge*, which she is so fond of quoting! I declare it is too bad; and as for Outlaw, he is a little rough to be sure, but just like a newly found diamond, easily polished."

"Well, all that I know is this," was the reply, "the poet had not him in his mind's eye, when he composed these two lines—

'For a thing of beauty
Is a joy for ever.'

—He is but of very little joy to any one; and even when he has on his Sunday going-to-meeting clothes, looks like a Cornish hog with a silk gown on. But you are laughing, and I know he is a favourite of yours, fair coz.; so I'll say no more, and will coincide with you in thinking, notwithstanding his little faults—and I know he has a *few*—he is possessed of a good heart of his own. But, by the by, where is this pic-nic going to be?"

"On the hills of Dartmoor."

"Bravo, bravo! I am so glad we are going to have a trip on land."

In the midst of this little colloquy, they had arrived at their journey's end, so after saying, "Now, you are as wise as myself," Jenny made her exit, for she had to make preparation for almost everything; and Ned was as busy as he could possibly be in making arrangements about the different "traps," where to meet, &c., on the long looked-for day, in addition to seeing to his own horses and harness, with numerous other little necessary items not worth enumerating here; whilst their cousin had his employment in keeping visitors in countenance who had come from a distance, encouraging any and every kind of amusement that their different imaginations gave rise to, from pitch and toss, to drop the handkerchief, for the purpose of killing time.

At length the long wished-for day broke forth, with all the freshness of a Devonshire summer morn; for a nice cool exhilarating breeze was gently blowing, sufficiently strong to fan them from the heat of the sun, in order to keep them comfortable; and the weather, altogether, could not have been more propitious for such an interesting occasion, had they taken particular caution in giving special directions to the clerk thereof. It is true, the wind had gone "back," and the long hand of the before-mentioned old-fashioned weather-glass had pointed to the slightly disfigured mark of "Changeable;" in addition to which, a few suspicious lowering clouds seemed to be gathering to the south-westward. But notwithstanding this bad omen, the inmates of Cleveland were determined for once to look on the "sunny side;" and although almost all noticed this alteration in the wonderful old "weather-wisè," each and every one kept it to themselves, for fear of damping the hilarity of

the occasion, and consoled their inward fears with the idea that the aforesaid glass was aged, and perhaps getting "totalish." At all events, as Amelia, the maid servant (who, by the by, had grown less superstitious lately), remarked to her young mistress, "It's very strange if the old *toad* can't be mistaken for once:" but every one was too busily engaged to take any notice of what she said.

The two brothers from London were touching themselves off to the best advantage, and having finished putting on their coats with that degree of care that not a single crease appeared thereon, were now giving their new silk hats the last polish, drawing their handkerchiefs carefully but gracefully round them—for a brush would have taken the gloss off—occasionally casting an eager look at a looking-glass, that had been brought down stairs on that particular occasion for the ostensible purpose of seeing if their whiskers were square, or had been pointed to the right angle; their eyebrows, the right curve; or that the curl, *a la Macassar*, which had given them so much trouble the night before in papering, had turned mutinous or not—for curling tongs were too troublesome to use, and people were apt to give that modern appendage to the toilette a turn too many, in which case, the individuals who happened to be so unfortunate stood a good chance of being bald before their time)—another look in the aforesaid glass, to see if the hats were on the proper "three hairs;" a touch at their "side boards," or collars, with a finisher-up with their spiffin ties: after which they pronounced themselves, in a loud voice, as being ready; just as if their late labour was the most momentous undertaking of the day. Neat and tidy they certainly did look, and as their brother Jack remarked (for he would have a word to say about everybody), "I say,

Harry, look at Dave and Bill there, they'll cut us out to *tatters*; if they were placed in the window of a first-rate snip's shop, on a peg, with a machine to turn them, like you see those full-grown wax figures at a perfumer and hairdresser's, they would attract sufficient custom for their employers to make a fortune in no time."

To do them justice, they looked exceedingly well, and as Jack in his peculiar manner hinted, showed their clothes off to the best advantage; for to use his words, "Their coats sat on their backs like the celebrated America's jib, as if 'twas a board."

In reply to which both brothers commenced "pulling his leg" by criticising *his* rig, asking him "Who his hatter was?" and politely wishing those present to "twig his heels;" finishing their "chaff" by begging him to oblige them with a few of his copperplate sayings.

Seeing that almost every one was laughing at his expense, Jack thought it best to "up stick and run," and just as he reached the door, fired off one of his favourite broadsides, by saying, "Keep away from wicked company;" and the next moment was off helping Ned, who, all this time, was setting the traps in order.

The ladies having taken their last look at the glass—which, by the by, had nearly all the quicksilver worn off on this occasion—and almost the last questions being asked of each other, such as, "How is my bonnet? does it look bent? Is my collar out behind? Is my hood down? Do you like my pinners?" and many others of the same interesting description, a sudden shout was heard from those outside that "they were come," which was a signal for every one to issue forth, and run down the gravel walk.

Sure enough there they were, the Hewtons, in a nice phaeton, drawn by a pair of cream-coloured ponies; and

the two sisters Emma and Amelia, mentioned a few chapters back, looking quite charming, with such a degree of cheerfulness and good humour sparkling from their pretty blue eyes, as if determined to enjoy the day's amusement, happen what might. Nor were the younger sisters at all behind in their looks, with the exception of one: who occasionally glanced wistfully under her pretty brown hat (at times when the others were laughing) across the water, as if there was some favourite swain absent in that quarter, that ought to have been present.

"Good morning," cries Emma; "here we are, you see, to our time."

"Yes, to our time," echoed Amelia.

After a few preliminary remarks on each side with regard to the weather, and various other items equally as important, and which they knew well enough before, with a little unnecessary stir, it was arranged that Ned and his two brothers, with his sisters Jenny and Bessy, Harry Acquillier, and two of the Misses Hewton, should go together in the Clamicks's vehicle, which happened to be a conveyance resembling a 'bus, with the cover off. In exchange, they were to have the phaeton, with Jack to drive them, which that good-natured individual set immediately about doing, remarking casually, as he took the reins, that "a contented mind was a continual feast."

Just as they were about to start, with the Collinsees in the rear—who consisted of a tall gaunt large-mouthed young man, with three fat red-cheeked young ladies as companions, in which it required very little discrimination in any one in coming to the conclusion that they were sisters—a cry was raised, "Here comes Outlaw." On turning back, a dog cart was seen coming towards them, driven at a most furious rate, perfectly heedless of

the little heaps of stones placed in the middle of the road for the purpose of macadamising the same. At times every one thought nothing less than a capsize must take place; for the spirited horse came dashing along, with distended nostrils and ears erect, as if bent on doing some mischief or other, if possible; making the vehicle roll from one side to the other like a drunken man, appearing to the spectators as if it would never regain its equilibrium. No one looked alarmed, imagining that he was alone and only running his own neck in jeopardy, in which, perhaps, the consoling remark from Jack, that "those that were good for nothing never come to any harm," tended, in some measure, to appease their fears.

As he came nearer, Amelia Hewton exclaimed, "Isn't that a pink muslin dress behind? it must be Maria, his sister."

"Yes," echoed the other Miss H., "it surely must be Maria."

At last Outlaw pulled sharp up, just within an inch of the Collinses, much to the discomfiture of the three fat red-cheeked young ladies, who didn't know whether it was proper to shriek or not; but seeing no one taking any notice of them, held their tongues; and pulling out his watch with his left hand, accompanying it with a gruff "haw, haw!" said, "Morning, ladies and gentlemen; hope I haven't kept you waiting; two minutes behind time, I see; always punctual, you know; couldn't help it, positively. 'Riar here," pointing with his left thumb over the same shoulder to an individual behind, enveloped in a pink muslin dress, "was as usual a quarter behind time; always takes so long putting on her bonnet; had to drag her away from the glass, actually."

"Oh, Mr. Jones! fie, Mr. Jones!" (for that was his proper name) screamed all the ladies in chorus.

"Don't mind his gan, Simmun and gentlemen," screeched the voice behind, but in such a shrill tone which would have thrown that inestimable character Miss Miggs, whom it was intended to imitate, completely in the shade. "I poured a mug of table beer right down the barrel," continued the pink muslin; and whilst those present were convulsed with laughter, Outlaw had alighted, and throwing the reins to his very affectionate but particularly bashful sister behind, with a "Here you are, 'Riar," enquired in a loud voice, "Where's Polly?" and espying the individual out that he was in search of, and who happened to be no less than Harry Acquilier himself—although why or wherefore he was called by that effeminate cognomen, no one knew besides the parties more immediately concerned, nor did his god-fathers or godmothers know anything about it.

"Hallo, Outlaw, where did you spring from, with your tippy patent leathers?" was the rejoinder.

"I am after you, my boy," exclaimed that eccentric but light-hearted individual, and suiting the action to the word, was soon in the same conveyance, but not before Jack had fired off one of his usual copperplate sayings, by remarking, in his own peculiar way, that "evil communications corrupt good manners."

All were now seated but Ned Middleton and three youngsters, two Clamicks and one Hewton, little boys that had arrived at that peculiar age in which they are beginning to make themselves mischievous, and (to use the words of their grown-up sisters) "particularly disagreeable at times;" such as passing uncharitable remarks, taking notice of little eccentricities they have no right to do, and being always in the way.

They had been sent by their respective mammas out of sheer kindness, "just as a treat," as they said, but in

reality, with the very laudable motive of taking care of their sisters. Poor little fellows! they little thought what a responsible trust was placed in their hands, or of the cross-questioning they would be obliged to undergo on their return: it was well they didn't.

"Up you jump, Ned; it's no use your shirking it," cried Jack with glee, pointing towards the vacant seat that Outlaw had left. "No more rabbit skins, Ned, no fear." This latter remark, which that original had made, was applicable to a very weak point of his brothers, viz., lack of whiskers, in lieu of which he had bristles, or (as Jack said) broomsticks.

It appeared that, on the last Valentine's day, Ned had received a parcel, done up with much care to represent an official document: it had its red tape, with a large official-looking seal at the back, and addressed in a good round business-like hand. Thinking, in the hurry of the moment, that it was blank tax papers, he opened it without more ado. What was his astonishment and wonder at finding, instead of the tax papers, two pieces of rabbit skin, cut in the shape of whiskers. Had he been alone at the moment, with no one present to see him open the parcel, in all probability it would have been kept quiet; but the two Misses Hewton coming in about that time, in all probability to enquire of Jenny how many valentines she had received, as well as to show their own—which, to do them credit, they prized very much—saw the whole of it, and indeed, immediately Emma espied it, exclaimed, "What a shame! who could have sent it?"

"Yes, who could have sent it?" was the immediate echo from her sister Amelia.

At which all three laughed so heartily that tears came from their eyes, whilst poor Ned, who looked at the time

thoroughly abashed, knew well enough they couldn't keep the secret, even if they felt so inclined; and when it got noised about, he would be laughed at by the whole parish. After turning and twisting the innocent cause of this mishap, the cover of the unwelcome present to examine the writing, post marks, &c., it was discovered that a few lines were written in one of the corners, which after much trouble were found (for they were written indifferently, as in haste) to consist of the following loving words, and which were evidently extracted from that emblem of modest young ladies, Miss Miggs:—"For my for ever ever blessed Simmun." The conclusion immediately come to was, it must be from some one on the other side of the water; hence a suspicion of Miss Jones.

"No use, Ned, you are in for it," continued Jack, highly amused; "utility should combine with ornament." In the midst of this little joke, Jack took compassion on his brother, and exchanged carriages, having first prevailed on the "pink muslin" to come with him in front, who still continued quoting her favourite; and during the sparring of words, her shrill voice could be heard, exclaiming, "Oh mim, oh sir, don't let there be words on my account," which convulsed every one with laughter.

The three before-mentioned little boys having been placed carefully behind, with their backs towards the horses—for which act of thoughtfulness and diplomacy, Jack got sweet smiles from their very affectionate sisters for his trouble and kindness—they fairly set off. Away they went through the shady green lanes, over hill and dale, through small villages, which made the inmates stare again, for they had not seen such a cavalcade since Van Amburgh came that way some years ago, when he

was travelling from town to town with his celebrated menagerie. At every cross turning, they appeared to gain strength; for the Liphills, Hallowells, and others had joined them; and "Yes, there's the Nortons, Ned," cried Outlaw; "don't you hear the bugle? they are coming down through Liphill woods."

Now, it was very strange that, although all were listening, Jenny should be the second to hear it. But whether it was that she had better ears, or was more used to the sound of the aforesaid instrument, it is impossible to say; but certain it is, she was the first to confirm Outlaw's assertion.

At this moment, their attention was drawn to the river they had to ford over; no great difficulty then, it being daylight and the tide low. All got safely across but Jack and Pink Muslin, who, thinking to frighten the youngsters behind into a little better order—for they had begun already to quiz those sensitive individuals—splashed into a much deeper part, which almost took their horse off his legs; and that spirited animal, feeling himself rather out of his element, began jumping and plunging in a most extraordinary manner, and could not be got to the opposite shore till the three little boys had well nigh been drowned, frightening them at once into silence and out of a week's growth instantaneously; and whilst Jack gave his charger a touch with his whip, as if to draw his particular attention to what he was about to say, uttered the following good piece of advice, "Quit vain and unprofitable pursuits:" and his fair companion in answer to kind enquiries from her friends, as to whether she was wet or not, shrieked out, *à la Miggs*, "No, sirs: no, mims; but raly it's give me such a turn."

On they went again, with a "Don't dodge that corner

so close, why you could shave that with a sixpence,—mind the ruts, old fellow:” they were about three feet deep, and at times quite up to the axle; but no one cared for that, as it was going along the river, and consequently could expect no other,—they would soon be out of it. Nearer and nearer came the sound of the bugle, till it echoed and re-echoed from one side of the valley to the other, as if the very hills were determined to be jolly on this particular occasion.

What’s the matter with Ned Middleton all at once? Ah! it’s the sound of the bugle that has cheered him up. Yes; she is coming, old fellow. Fanny is coming: you will soon see her pretty face, hear her light-hearted musical laugh, and feel her sweet balmy breath on your cheek. Well might every bone in your strong powerful frame quiver again, as you touch that fair delicate hand, as if you could move the earth itself for her sake. She is come: what do you change colour for, when your eyes meet hers? Why, because you love her, Ned; and it is no use your trying to keep it from the world, for they know it.

What a contrast to his sister Jenny! Instead of cheerfulness, there was a degree of sadness on her otherwise laughing good-tempered face, as Dick Norton—or Farmer Dick, as he was generally called—shook her tenderly by the hand; and in answer to his “How be he-e, Miss Je-a-n-e?” there was no changing of colour perceptible in her face, no tremulous motion playing about the lips; neither was there the joyous look of gladness in her bright eyes, welcoming him on his arrival, but simply a common-place friendly “Good morning.” Ah, Dick, my poor fellow! she has the advantage of you, for the innermost secrets of your heart are known to her. She knows you well. Don’t think that smile on her face is a

good omen for the future : it is the reverse ; for if you look closely into her sweet-looking countenance, you could detect a degree of sadness mixed with her gaiety, which would tell you at once that it was forced. For what ? you would say. Echo answers, For the purpose of making you look happy : it is her very nature to do so. She knows as well as you do what power she has over your happiness ; but do *you* know *her*, Dick ?

* * * * *

"Come, on you go!" halloed the impatient Jack. "You'd better look sharp and mind your eye, or else the 'hindmost dog will catch the hare.'"

This latter remark was intended as a *double entendre*, which his companion, the Pink Muslin, perfectly understood ; for she knew Fanny Norton to be her rival, and replied, with the Miggs' shrill voice, and a toss of the head that would have completely thrown that affectionate and sympathising creature into ecstasies, had she witnessed it, "Pray, don't relude to that," after which there were roars of laughter, reaching from one end to the other of the different conveyances.

All being fairly started again, away they went enjoying themselves to their hearts' content ; and in due course of time, the bleak and almost barren hills of Dartmoor were reached, with the little village town, and the prison, with its gloomy-looking walls, looming picturesquely in the distance. The cool refreshing breeze that came over those dreary moors seemed to invigorate every one, and more particularly the two brothers who had been cooped up in one of those large warehouses in the Metropolis, surrounded on one side with smoke, and on the other by old Father Thames, which had been so long, so Dizzy says, "the pride and joy of every Englishman," but now so full of mud and dirt, that the stench in the hot sum-

mer months arising therefrom is almost unbearable. Such good spirits were the whole party in, consequently, and luckily no untoward event or accident had happened to damp the hilarity of the occasion, although great fear was at times manifested about Farmer Dick and his horse, who, finding he could not obtain a seat in the same vehicle with Miss Jenny, exchanged with his younger brother, mounted on horseback, and would persist in riding close by her side; so that at times, when the roads were very narrow, he ran the greatest risk imaginable of being squeezed to a mummy, notwithstanding the many warnings and solicitations of his sister Margaret.

"Richard! oh, Richard! do come here," would she exclaim; "you will surely hurt yourself."

"All right,—all right, Maggy," would be the only reply she could get.

Margaret Norton, or "Maggy," as her brother always called her, was the elder by two years of her sister Fanny, but looked much older than she really was. There was not that light-hearted manner about her, for poor Maggy had had her troubles,—more perhaps than her share. She had charge of her father's house, her mother having died a year or two before; but such a father! decency forbids that we should expose him to the world, for "*Longa est injuria, longæ ambages.*"

But *a-propòs*, Maggy strove hard to make matters smooth and straight at home. It wasn't her fault that her father and eldest brother were at loggerheads with each other: she couldn't help it; and as for pleasure, there was none for her. It was no use going to pic-nics, for she couldn't enjoy herself; but as every one else went, why of course she was obliged to go; and her brother Richard wished it, consequently she couldn't refuse, for

she loved him dearly, with all the tenderness of a true-hearted sister. Ah, Maggy! that little hollow cough, that slight hectic flush, tells a tale. Grief has brought that on: it is no use your trying to conceal it, for there it is; and if you are not very careful, it will get such a hold upon you, that in a short time you will be frightened at it yourself. It's no use your passing it lightly off, thinking it is a slight cold you have caught, for you are mistaken. Neither ought you to tell your brother, in answer to his kind inquiries of, "Are you enjoying yourself, Maggy?" "Very much; indeed, thank you, Richard:" for your voice is melancholy, and belies you; in addition to which, there is a look of sadness about your intelligent face. But do stir up, for you have kind friends around you, and all are enjoying themselves. Throw care to the winds for a time: it isn't every day in the week you go to a pic-nic.

Ah, here they are in the little village of Prince Town. Pulled up opposite an inn, where it was notified on a small board over the door that there was to be had "Good stabling," and underneath, in small letters, "Refreshments to be had here for man and horse." This gratifying information appeared to be the very *desideratum* to all those who were owners of those invaluable quadrupeds; the proposition, therefore, to halt was no sooner made by the aforesaid individuals, than it was carried by acclamation. Consequently, the delightful process of alighting commenced, which created great laughter; for there was much quizzing going on—which, to tell the truth, the young ladies rather liked, particularly those who had small and pretty feet: they seemed not at all backward in showing them off to the best advantage. All had succeeded in getting out but the three fat red-cheeked young ladies, the Collinses, who

seemed to be in a most deplorable situation. The vehicle they were in was rather an extraordinary one; and amongst its various peculiarities, had no step to it to let them down. In all probability, this difficulty would have been got over easy enough if they had been alone; for they could have scrambled out themselves. But to do so now was perfect folly, as all eyes were on the *qui vive*—drawn purposely and spitefully into that particular focus by Maria Jones,—as one of them whispered to the other, with a look of downright despair. However, it wasn't to be at all supposed that the gallants were going to allow three young blushing emblems of innocence to remain in that awkward position long, even if it was a source of much amusement to many of the lookers-on; consequently, great was the rush of volunteers to the rescue, and after a great deal of tittering and giggling, three were chosen who were to take upon themselves the responsibility of liberating them: much to the delight of the young ladies' affectionate brother, who bawled out, with his great mouth open about a yard wide, that "he had had trouble enough to get them in."

The three volunteers were Jack Middleton, Outlaw, and our friend Harry Aquilier. The first thing to do was to take out the back board, and with a little coaxing, backed by one of Jack's copperplate sayings that "delays are dangerous," the eldest and fattest made a sudden spring directly into that original's arms; and had he not been backed by the other two, who supported him behind, would, without the slightest doubt, have been precipitated with his valuable burden into the middle of the road.

The first experiment having proved successful, even beyond all expectations, the other two sisters followed their senior's example, and were safely landed on terra

firma ; but instead of thanking their deliverers, they all rushed on their poor unfortunate relative, telling him, in a whisper loud enough for all to hear, that "the very first opportunity, they would give him an 'apple-pie bed' for his trouble." This ended that part of the play—all passed it off as a good joke ; and the Londoners, in allusion to some remark about the trio's ankles, muttered out something about "beef to the heels," which of course no one could understand, and consequently laughed at, to show their wisdom. The horses having been unharnessed and provided for, the *prog* safely placed under lock and key, all prepared for a stroll through the village ; but with regard to their peregrinations, we will leave that for the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

"'Tis sweet beneath a summer sky
 To ramble o'er the daisied green ;
 To breathe the zephyr's scented sigh,
 And revel in the blooming scene :
 To sit and watch a sparkling eye—
 To slily steal the rosy kiss—
 To note the blush—to catch the sigh—
 What is there half so sweet as this !"

It would have been a most amusing, as well as a ludicrous sight for any uninterested looker-on, to have been there and "twigged" the various manœuvres and stratagems that were practised by many of the party, for the purpose of being properly paired ; but manage it they did, and very nicely too. Perhaps the good-humoured remark of old Newpark, who led the way with his better

half, did a good deal towards the satisfactory arrangement, which was to "follow my example," ladies and gentlemen, or, in other words, "every Punch choose his Judy." Away went the Londoners with two of the fat red-cheeked young ladies; Ned Middleton and Fanny Norton; Outlaw and a Miss Cothell; Dick Norton and Jenny Middleton; Harry Aquilier with the two eldest Misses Hewton, &c., &c., &c.: all got paired in an almost incredibly short space of time. But where was Maggy? She had intended stopping behind, in order to arrange about dinner; but Jenny hung back for some time, and would not be led by her brother if she didn't take the other arm, consequently it could not be otherwise. Poor Dick, he had for some time past been looking forward for this opportunity, and had played his cards well in offering his arm before any one else; but just at the very moment when he imagined fortune was beginning to smile upon him, this untoward event occurred. However, there was no help for it. Last but not least, bringing up the rear, was that good-tempered couple, Jack Middleton and 'Riar Jones—or Pink Muslin, as she has been before called—who had chosen this place, so that she could have a full view of everybody, and pass her remarks accordingly, which were generally borrowed from her favourite Miggs; and in allusion to Fanny Norton, made purposely by the mischief-loving Jack, screamed out, "A fat-face puss she is, as I ever came across."

Tramp, tramp; on they went, enjoying the beautiful fresh air, through the streets, up by the prison, seeing the convicts harvesting, and (as the loquacious Jack remarked) "doing something for their salt, if they got their meat for nothing;" then towards the moor, or the uncultivated part. Many were the jokes and "dry hits" that passed, all of course in good temper; but what

caused the greatest laugh was a message from Mrs. Newpark to her youngest daughter, Miss Jemima Newpark, delivered by one of the young Masters Newpark, who, instead of doing as he was desired, "to convey it in a whisper to his grown-up sister," uttered it loud enough to be heard by all, commencing first by attracting everybody's attention, calling out at the top of his voice, "Jemima! mother desired me to tell—"

Here the portly Mrs. Newpark commenced making most unintelligible telegraphs with her arms, reminding one of a walking semaphore; but all to no purpose, for the young urchin was bent on doing mischief, and continued in the same strain, "—to tell you, that it is her wish and order that you should not walk farther than you can conveniently help with your present partner, as he only rented a small estate, and was but an 'afternoon farmer.'"

Here the poor little fellow's voice was completely drowned in the hearty roars of laughter that followed; and some little time elapsed before he could be again heard, when (with a few encouraging words from Outlaw) he proceeded to finish what he had so auspiciously commenced:—

"And—and that his term would be up in another year only."

There was another shout, in the middle of which could be heard the loud voice of the infuriated mamma, who now persisted in denying every word that her obedient son had said, and in which Miss Jemima was bound to coincide, consequently sticking closer (if possible) to her blushing dumbfounded swain, who knew well enough every word was true, and felt it accordingly. But the spirited young girl—who, by the by, really had a liking for the young man—was not to be outwitted by her lynx-

eyed over-careful mamma; and in answer to his question of, "Would you prefer leading with any one else?" gave the plump reply of, "No;" spoken with the most charming *naïveté* imaginable; and then said, by way of qualifying the answer, "We must lead together now, to make mamma think we believe her."

This clever piece of casuistry settled the matter: from that moment, the match was made; proving that loving couples were oftener brought together by a little opposition, than if they had everything smooth and serene before them.

To any of our readers who may feel interested about these two loving hearts, it will not be out of place to say, the proposal was made and accepted that same day, notwithstanding the "small estate;" in a few months after, a runaway marriage; and at the present moment, he is one of the largest, as well as one of the most respectable, yeomen in the parish in which he resides; has three pretty little children, the eldest, a fine boy, in addition to his bearing the Christian name of his doting father, has the extraordinary one of "Dartmoor" after it; and old Mrs. Newpark, whenever she reads of an *elopement* in the papers, remarks that it will prove a happy marriage, as her Jemima has turned out, contrary to all her friends' prognostications, the happiest and best of all her children. Many others had good reason to remember that picnic; but *nous verrons*.

When they had proceeded some short distance into the barren wild place, looking for a shady spot wherein to fix their tent, their attention was drawn by a loud peal of thunder to the state of the weather; and as if their different thoughts were connected by one electric wire, each imagined the old weather glass before them, with the hand still pointing to the word "Changeable," that

they had left behind at Cleveland ; for to the far west were now most unmistakeable signs of a forthcoming summer's storm ; and as Harry Acquillier remarked, " It looked rather *soapy*," which no one present attempted to gainsay, for to contradict a sailor in his opinion about the weather, was an act of presumption never once thought of in the " west countrie : " so all thought of dining out of doors—

" With nature's own table-cloth spread at their feet,
Whilst the breezes blew over them softly and sweet,"

was completely out of the question. There was nothing for it but to retrace their steps to the inn from whence they set out. Louder and louder grew the peals of thunder, very vivid became the flashes of lightning ; whilst those little dark clouds seen just rising above the horizon, were now coming nearer, and increasing every minute in size. Quick, quick ! was the cry from every one ; " Hop, skip, and a jump, ladies," cried old Newpark, showing a very good example himself. In a very short time they had got back, and (as the Londoners remarked) " Just in time to save their bacon ; " for down came the rain in torrents. But no one cared about it now ; and, luckily, there was a long room up stairs, just adapted to their wants, where all the ladies adjourned, and became extremely busy in unpacking their different hampers, some cutting up cucumbers, some taking out the many dishes of clotted cream, and others arranging the table, which had become now so heavily laden with the numerous dishes—for there was almost everything eatable there : turkeys, geese, ducks, fowls, and sufficient to last them, many as they numbered, a week or more. All were making themselves useful ; even the Londoners were employed, and appeared to enjoy themselves amaz-

ingly in uncorking and decanting the different wines. At last, everything was prepared. The work, like everything else, had come to an end: it had been conquered; consequently, Dick Norton's bugle was sounded as a signal for dinner. In poured a stream of cheerful faces, and a little of the before-mentioned manœuvring again took place. After some bustle and noise, old Mr. Newpark was unanimously voted to the chair, whilst his better half declared no one but herself should be *his Vice*; and seeing she was determined, there was no attempt to dispute the question; for after all, the labour was not great, at least in her case, as she helped a cut-up dish—a disjointed goose.

All had evidently suited themselves with regard to their seats. Even Miss 'Riar Jones had succeeded in getting close to her "Simmun;" for Ned Middleton was in a nice pickle, having the Pink Muslin on one side with his pretty Fanny on the other; consequently, the two rivals were within arm's length of each other. Miss Jemima Newpark was, strange to say, still by the side of "afternoon farmer," looking as happy as possible. Jack Outlaw and the others were all placed, and the three fat red-cheeked young ladies were looking *so* innocent—just as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouths. After grace had been duly said and responded to, at it they went. The game of knives and forks had commenced; silence for a time reigned, which was only broken by the giggling of two fat red-cheeked young ladies, occasioned by their each pulling the "merry-thought" of a fowl to see who would get married the first. When the sweets were being dispatched, Pink Muslin, who had been eyeing her rival for some time, watching an opportunity to serve her out for old grudges, perceived her carefully hoarding a *bonne bouche*, the

cream, in a corner of her plate, for the last bite. To purloin it was but the thought of a second: immediately everybody's attention was drawn by that sly and deep emblem of bashfulness to a crack in the ceiling, and whilst all eyes were elevated to the spot, she with much adroitness and sleight of hand, exchanged plates, hers being at that precise moment empty; then crossed her arms, and looked the very picture of maiden modesty. When Miss Fanny had sufficiently gratified her curiosity, in common with the others, in looking at the ceiling, the tit-bit still running in her head, she thought she would now enjoy it. What was her regret and consternation, when taking up her spoon for that purpose, at finding it gone, clean gone. On second thoughts, she imagined she must have ate it. The look of disappointment that came over her countenance in consequence was ludicrous in the extreme, and fine "nuts" for her opponent, who (to improve the matter) screamed out the sympathetic and consolatory words of the renowned Miggs, "That we never know the full value of some wines and fig trees till we loses 'em."

This was quite enough for Miss Fanny, who could now give a pretty good guess what had become of it, and looking at her with a degree of scorn, said "she hoped it did her good," inwardly praying to the contrary. When it became known, there was a good laugh at Miss Fanny's expense.

In due time, grace was again said, the cloth removed, decanters placed on the table, and—and—what? why, yes, actually! old Newpark on his legs! Yes, there stood the rosy-cheeked jolly old gentleman, to borrow one of the Londoner's phrases, "on his pins," about to make a speech. Silence was proclaimed, amidst the loud jingling of glasses and thumps on the table, when he

commenced, in a clear loud voice, but slightly tremulous :—

“Ladies and Gentlemen,—As I believe it is generally the custom, when we meet together and visit any particular locality in the way of pleasure, to give some traditional, I may say some historical, account of the same, which—[here the old gentleman, who was rather nervous, broke down; but with a few hear-hears from his listeners, recovered himself, and began anew]—Ladies and Gentlemen,—My breaking-down reminds me very much of an anecdote that I read in the newspapers a few years ago, but will not vouch for its correctness, which I will relate—that is, if I get your permission.”

“Do, do!” were the cries from all.

“Well, it was this. A distinguished member on the Treasury Benches, in our *glorious* House of Commons, rose in his place, for the purpose of making a brilliant speech in defence of some great measure—[Outlaw suggested Income Tax Bill]—which the government of the day wished passed, for their very existence almost depended on it; and which should appear in large type before the wondering world the next day, to the gratification of himself and edification of the public. But, unfortunately, after he had caught the wary eye of the Speaker, and got on his legs, the imaginary congratulations of his friends that were ringing in his ears completely overpowered him, and he could only succeed in going as far as, ‘Sir, I conceive—I conceive—I conceive—,’ then quietly resumed his seat. Upon this, an opposition member immediately stood up and addressed the House, commencing with, ‘I per-ceive the right honourable gentleman, the member for —, has just con-ceived three times, and brought forth nothing, consequently,’ &c.; which was

hailed with hearty cheers from the opponents to government, amid the loud laughter of the whole House."

[Here all laughed, and the rising generation, little Clamickses, Hewtons, and Newparks, echoed the encouraging and patronising word, "Capital;" when the latter little urchin unfortunately nearly choked himself by a piece of apple, with which he was gorging himself, "going the wrong way," as his mamma said; and after a short space of time, what with pouring quantities of water down his throat, and great thumps on the back—this latter infliction being done in downright earnest by his affectionate sister Miss Jemima, from whom it emanated, in the first place, as a little bit of sweet revenge on her part for the *exposé* in the morning—the poor little fellow, knowing he stood a good chance of being either drowned or thumped to death, had the good sense to clear it at once. Silence once more restored, old Newpark resumed.]

"So, as I could not bring forth anything at first, I will try again.—[Hear, hear.] About the traditional, and, I may say, the historical account of this 'sublime waste,' was what I intended speaking about; and although many here present know as much as I do myself on the subject, yet others, from lack of memory or otherwise, have well nigh forgotten it. To those, and the rising generation, I now particularly address myself.—[Here Newpark, junr., touched the right side of his nose with his forefinger, which was intended to denote that he was paying attention.]

"To begin: with regard to this extensive and elevated surface of heath, morass, and rock, which bears the name of Dartmoor, its length is about thirty miles, stretching from north to south, and fourteen from east to west, in

breadth ; and has been computed to contain more than 100,000 acres.

"The greater part belongs to the parish of Lidford, and constitutes, perhaps, the *largest* parish in England. 'King John,' says Ridson, 'assigned it to be a forest ;' and King Henry III. did not only confirm his father's grant, but set down certain bounds of Dartmoor in a charter of perambulation, which, I may tell you, is preserved to this day in the office of the duchy of Cornwall. It was given by Edward III. to his son the Black Prince, when invested with the title of the Duke of Cornwall.—[Here the old gentleman, who was nearly out of breath, was loudly cheered.]—Now, although that portion of the high road which we have this day passed, presented an unvaried scene of solitariness and desolation, yet to those who pursue their investigation of the moor beyond the ordinary and beaten track, much would be found to delight the artist, the poet, and the antiquary.—[Hear, hear.]

"The peculiar characteristics of Dartmoor are derived from the granite tors, which are found piled mass upon mass, mostly upon the summits of its numerous heights, and the wild impetuosity of its streams, 'dashing through narrow channels at the base of lofty eminences of crag and cliff.' These, when seen, produce on the mind of the spectator mingled sensations of surprise and pleasure. Besides this, the numerous remains of altars, circles, obelisks, logans, and cromlechs, scattered over the moor, and the names now attached to many of the tors, such as Bel Tor, Mis Tor, Ham Tor, and others, attest it to have been once a celebrated station of Druidism. From its lofty position, it is peculiarly the region of mists, storms, and tempests. The peaks of its mighty tors, standing up many hundred feet high, intercept the mois-

ture of the clouds, and great quantities of rain fall in and around the moor, during the year.—[Hear, hear.] The mist comes on at times so sudden and dense, that those who are overtaken in it, out of the beaten track, find a difficulty in regaining their habitations, and are sometimes lost. But notwithstanding all this, the climate is particularly healthy; and I have heard it stated, on good authority, that no person, born and bred on Dartmoor, was ever yet known to die of *pulmonary consumption*.

“There are no trees here now, but there can be very little doubt that at one time it was a forest, as expressed in old deeds.—[Hear, hear.] The whole of the soil appears to be composed of a dark black mould, or decayed vegetable substance. This, when dug up and well dried in the sun, is called *peat*, and is used for fuel by the inhabitants living in and upon the confines of the moor throughout the year. Where the heath and bog do not intervene, very good pasturage for cattle and sheep is afforded through the summer months, of which most you here present are perfectly well aware, as also of the delicacy and flavour imparted to the flesh of the latter by the sweet herbage of the moor, making the mutton fed on Dartmoor highly prized throughout the country. I shall now conclude this brief account by quoting a few of the lines of Carrington, who is the poet, *par excellence*, of the moor. These run thus:—

‘————— The frantic seer
Here built his sacred circles: for he loved
To worship on the mountain’s breast sublime;
The earth his altar, and the bending heaven
His canopy magnificent.
Farewell, ye solitude immense, farewell!’

—[Here the old gentleman paused awhile, and wiped the perspiration from his forehead.]

“One word about this little village, Prince Town, in which we are at present sojourning. It has a large prison, capable of holding 10,000 prisoners of war, was built in 1806, and is at present a convict establishment.

—[The speaker came suddenly to a dead stop, on account of some semaphoric signals from the Vice, which no one understood but himself; and after clearing his throat, and putting on an extremely serious face, again resumed.]

“Being *obliged* to bring my account of Dartmoor to a close—[he here looked hard at his better half, the Vice]—let me congratulate you on meeting together once more in friendliness and in amity, and if I may judge by the blooming and rose-coloured cheeks of the ladies at present around me, I may add, in health likewise.—[Cheers.] Before I sit down, I will say a few words to the unmarried portion here present, bachelors as well as spinsters, which is simply this: Whilst you remain single or unmated, your lives will be like that moor I have just been talking about—a ‘desolate and dreary waste,’ useless to yourselves and to everybody around you—[Outlaw suggested the exception of feeding sheep]—and you may depend on it, in the broad landscape of this world, there will be no bright corn fields to view, or sweet-scented flowers strewed along your rugged path, to cheer you on your wearisome journey through this uncertain life; and in a word, ladies and gentlemen, you will not have fulfilled that destiny for which you were intended by your Creator, namely, to ‘be fruitful and multiply’—that being the first blessing conferred upon Adam and Eve.—[Up to this time, there was such a complete silence that a pin could have been heard to drop; but now, every one gave vent to their feelings in such shouts of “bravo,

bravo!" and jingling of glasses, as to put a stop for some time to what was about to be uttered.]

"Bear with me but another minute, and I have done. In conclusion, let me express a hope that you will think carefully over what I have said; so that next year—please God we are living and well—when we again meet at our annual pic-nic, you will say, 'Mr. Newpark, I have taken your advice.' All that remains for me to do now, is to thank you for listening to me so long and attentively, and to ask you to drink a bumper, as well as give three hearty cheers, towards 'Our next merry meeting.'"

Here every one filled their glasses, and did as they were desired, almost rending the air with their shouts; and old Newpark took his seat amidst the most rapturous applause.

After dessert, the long table was removed, and the company in general sat round the room, when the Vice, after some coaxing, sung, in a good soprano voice, an old-fashioned English song, the pith of which was, reminding some unknown individual where they had first met; and having, at the end of every verse, the echo or chorus of, "Long long ago, long long ago." After she had finished, and the health and song being drunk, as in the olden time and with due ceremony, the old lady said she was entitled to a "call," and she would therefore thank Mr. Acquilier for one of his sea songs; and all the young ladies, as a matter of course, chimed in—"Do, I should so much like to hear a nautical song by a sailor."

There was no getting out of this; but the difficulty arose, as to what song it should be? for amongst our friend Acquilier's other peculiarities was that unfortunate one, lack of memory. He knew a great variety of snatches of songs, it is true—from "Beautiful Venice City of

Song," down to that very popular one of Sam Cowell's, "Billy Barlow;" but did not recollect one in full. Had they invited him to give them a medley, he would have been quite at home; for he would have commenced with that celebrated and well known Indian tune of, "Tiddy Rum, Tiddy Rum, Tiddy Rum," and ended with a Chinese ching-a-ring, which would have amused the youngsters, if no one else.

However, as there was silence, and old Newpark saying the encouraging words of, "Go a-head, Acquilier, my boy; I'll help you," began an old sea ballad, in the hope that, as he proceeded, the words would come back to his memory. How far he succeeded, the following specimen of an attempt will show:—

"Bell her in the fore yard,
Bell her in the main, oh.
Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!
The monkey played the fiddle, oh!"

As he could not recollect any more of that interesting song, he was obliged to stop; much to the regret of every one, and more particularly Mrs. Newpark, who said she was quite fascinated by it, but hoped he would try something else.

Now, the only one besides that he could at all recollect, was a very Jackish song indeed, which he had heard many years before in the fore-castle of a ship, and to be properly appreciated ought to be sung in character; which he no sooner hinted than it was grasped at directly, consequently he made his exit to dress for the occasion, and in a very short time again made his *entrée*, looking like a thorough Jack tar, and sung, in a good mellow voice, the following song, imitating, as much as he could, the manner and tone in which he first heard it, particularly

the way in which the end of every line was drawled out:—

ACQUILIER'S SONG.

Young Fanny hath a-tur-ned her true love away-e-ey-e-ey;
And I in old Engle-and no long-er will stay-e-ey-e-ey.
For I'll cross the wide oc-ean all on my bare breast,
In search of my true love, she's the gal I loves be-st.

All the ships in the-y har-bour may sail without sai-el;
Each of the Lords of the Ad-miralty turned into a great wha-e-el.
Let the say burn like fter, by the pow-ers above e-ove-e,
I nev-er will de-ceive the lass that I love-e-ove-e.

Then here's a health to all true lov-yers wheresom-ever they be-e-ee.
Bad luck to desay-vers by land and by sea-e-ee.
I'll be as con-sti-ant as a turtle dove-e-ove,
Oh, I nev-er will prove false to the gal that I love-e-ove.

Having finished and made his bow, Harry was about to retire, when his audience rose *en masse*, and loud indeed was the applause and encores that met his ear, which nothing could appease but his promising to sing a verse or two of another song; and having taken what he termed a "spike" (that is, a drink) to clear his throat, he again commenced:—

"Here comes I, poor Jack,
Just returned from sea, sirs,
With shiners in my sack—
And what do you think of me, sirs?
For two long years I've been
A-cruizing the Black Sea over;
Many brave fights I've seen,
But now I'm back in "clover."

CHORUS—Singing Too-ral-loo-ral-loo, too-ral-loo ral-ido,
Too-ral-loo-ral-loo, too-ral-loo ral-ido."

Everybody joined in chorus and made the room ring again, which Harry Acquilier took advantage of, and

made his exit; without waiting to be thanked, for he knew that—

“*Adolescentem verecundum esse decet.*”

On his return, having changed his Jack's “rig,” old Newpark informed him, in a whisper, that it was his turn to make a call now, and pointed slyly to the youngest of the three fat red-cheeked young ladies, who were rather sentimentally inclined, and at that moment were simpering away in the corner; and who, in answer to questions put by her sisters, of, “What is the matter with you?” answered, with a most lack-a-daisical melancholy expression on her fat face, that “Mr. Acquilier's song was too much for her: she couldn't help it, but she knew she was wrong in giving way to it. Such lovely words!—‘the turtle dove,’ for instance!”

At that particular moment, she was asked by *him* to sing; and after a little pressing, sung, with much affectation—but which is often mistaken for feeling—the pretty little song of what she called, “It is ‘ard to give the ‘and where the ‘art can never be.” Then her brother sung something about “The ‘orn of the ‘hunter is ‘eard on the ‘ills.” Then the Misses Hewton sung that beautiful duet, “What are the wild waves saying?” In fact, all sung, and were merry, and enjoyed themselves to their hearts' content. The village fiddlers were sent for, and old Newpark, with his better half, led off the ball in a country dance, which reminded them of good olden times.

Look at the cheerful old couple, how happy they appear, as they cross hands, skipping it up and down the middle right merrily, showing a good example to all around them. Never mind the weather: let it pelt as hard as it likes—the harder the better; the sooner ~~at~~

will be over. All were tripping it "on the light fantastic toe," and Jack Middleton was whispering to his undaunted partner, the Pink Muslin, a few soft words, as they glided up and down the centre, finishing it with one of his usual sayings, that "it is a poor heart that never rejoices."

Quadrilles, polkas without number, schottisches, and Scotch reels, passed quickly away, hardly giving the fiddlers and tambourine player time to draw breath. In the middle of the latter dance, a stranger introduced himself, which put a stop for a time to the festivities. It did not require much discrimination or knowledge of human beings in general, for any of those present to puzzle themselves long in ascertaining who, or what countryman, this stranger was, as the very *outré* manner in which he introduced himself was a sufficient criterion to judge by, saying nothing about his personal appearance or of his peculiar nasal twang. There was one present, at least—Harry Acquilier—who immediately, on first sight, placed him down in his own mind as a thorough-going long spare goatee-chinned lantern-jawed go-a-head Yankee; and consequently had—as he whispered to Outlaw, who happened to be near him—"The whole length and breadth of him to an azimuth;" or in other words, to the one hundred-thousandth fractional part of an inch.

However, as he has entered without invitation into their society, let him speak for himself. After making his *salaam*, or what was intended as a very polite scrape—which would have done our friend the purser's eyes good, had he beheld the same—he said, "How d'ye do, strangers? I calkilate I've made rather free-and-easy-like with you, intruding myself on your company; but the fact is, I've just crossed this tarpation swamp, or

moor, as they call it in this country, and after changing every rag I had on me which was wet through to the skin, leaving not a dry thread on my back, I felt a great vacuum in my coppers—which, by the by, happened to be rather hot this morning; so, on asking that thin-skinned dolt of a landlord down stairs if he had any grub, was told by him that there were three Cornish dishes in the cupboard, called respectively squab pasty, star-gazing pie, and tantadlie tart. On enquiring the contents as near as he could guess, I learnt that the first was made up of a general mixture, containing (amongst its numerous varieties) apples, onions, potatoes, fish, and meat, with such a crust!—as black as the ace of spades, and just as tough. The second contained pilchards [fish] only, and were so delightfully arranged, that their heads were sticking out through the pie crust, with their eyes fixed staring at you like a conger. If you believe me, strangers, I could no more have touched that pie with a knife, with all those ghost-like eyes concentrated, as it were, into one focus, looking at me, than I could have done as Columbus did, cross over to the States in an undecked boat."

How much more he might have said, no one can tell; for old Newpark interrupted him by holding out the hand of welcome, and in a very short time young America was seated at a small round table, with good viands before him, which, he said, was "just what they got in the States; and if he had only some good beverages before him—such as gum ticklers, neck twisters, gin cocktails, and brandy smashers—he should have completely fancied himself in that inventing, discovering, and creating land of liberty, the Republic of America."

Having satisfied the keener portion of his most ravenous appetite, he became, as a matter of course, much

more talkative. Many were the anecdotes that he told about his wonderful country, the States. Jabber-jabber, on went the Yankee's tongue—there was no stopping it: just like a clock that had been wound up for the occasion, it kept its regular click-click. Even Newpark, junior, failed in bringing it to a close; for when he drew Brother Jonathan's attention to the carpet he was spitting and squirting tobacco juice upon, that over-sensitive person took it for a text, and rebuked the poor little boy in these round terms.

"Look 'ere, you little ugly deßun-easter, I knowed a young urchin considerable like you down to Connecticut, only don't squint, [Newpark, junr., squinted a little] but he never said half as much to me as you have;" and observing those around beginning to look rather serious, continued, "I dare say, strangers, you know as well as I do, that 'old customs, like old shoes, wear too easily to be readily thrown aside.'"

"Never mind,—never mind," cried old Newpark, "don't take any notice; he is but a brat of a boy. Here, help yourself to a little Plymouth gin," passing the decanter at the same time.

After doing as he was bid, Jonathan again proceeded, picking his teeth with his fork meanwhile.

"Whilst I am about it, I'll just make a clean breast of it, and tell you all a few plain facts. My country is misrepresented in England: you don't know us. The picture you draw of my countrymen is this:—Slouched hat—lank hair—sallow face—striped pantaloons—swallow-tail coat—quid in mouth—[young Newpark hinted in an under tone that *he* had a quid in *his* mouth]—whittling a stick—no spittoon on floor—brandy smasher on table—bowie knife and revolver in belt; add a peculiar nasal twang, place his feet on the mantel-piece, and

you have the type of a live American. One man is surprised that he speaks English decently; another, that his complexion is fair; while a third is astonished that his leg is not set in the middle of his foot, and that his hair, African-like, does not take root and grow again, like the banyan tree. As sands make mountains, drops oceans, so do little cuts of ridicule create large words of irritation. Gowns, wigs, queues, and Lord Mayors' shows are prejudices too deeply rooted to be lightly cast off. So, this constant misrepresentation of everything American settles in the mind of the child, and manhood refuses to dispel it. Neglected in infancy, oppressed in youth, ridiculed in manhood; yet we are accused of over sensitiveness,—of ingratitude,—our faults exaggerated, but our virtues unextolled. This is not right. We must be either friends or foes. Like married life, either heaven or hell: there is no half way. Free seas—free thought—free speech—free trade—free press, are our common heritage: all are free both in body and in mind. Steam, gas, and electricity, are the 'liberty, equality, and fraternity' which mark the go-a-head American. The steam-whistle frights the owls that wink and dose the live-long day; the gas light scares away the rats and bats of superstition and bigotry; while electricity sweeps off the cobwebs, the filth, and rubbish of ignorance, weighed down with wealth and vanity, propped up with titles. Some time has now elapsed since mother and daughter parted: why should we keep alive the old sore? Days are ripples in life's sea, years its heavy swells; while centuries are its storm waves, that wash away all living things. Almost a century has gone: steam-ships arrive and depart as regularly as the day; yet while America knows England, how little does England know America. You may stare, strangers; but what I am

at present relating to you are facts not to be contradicted. The child never forgets the associations of youth ; but the parent sees the child married, and knows less of its future life."

At this particular juncture of his lecture, Newpark, jun.—who had some little idea that the man from the Great Republic was saying something not at all to his credit, and which would damage him in the opinion of those present—thought he would, if possible, put him out, by asking a question or venturing a remark, which he did by saying, " Oh, will you please to tell me, Mr. Yankee, if it is true that the dogs' tails in the States curl so tarnation tight that they cannot put their hind legs to the ground ? "

" You ugly deöun-easter," was the only part heard of the polite reply ; for a signal from old Newpark caused the fiddles and tambourine to strike up Roger de Coverley, in which every one, except Jonathan and the young Britishers, took part.

When this was over, there was a rush to depart ; for the shades of evening had long closed. But as the weather had not moderated at all, and it was impossible to cross those dreary and black moors with such torrents of rain and in such a storm, they all sat down again, and invited the Yankee to sing. That very candid individual said he would rather not, as he had an idea of his own—quite an original one—that the only song he knew would not be acceptable to the distinguished company who surrounded him. This lame excuse only made them ask the more ; and, indeed, all were now determined that he should do so.

Seeing there was no help for it, Young America cleared his throat by that very good process adopted by Sam Weller's friend, Job Trotter, when they met in the Fleet

prison, viz., by draining his pewter to the last drop, and then turning it upside down to let the froth run out. Having succeeded in doing this to his entire satisfaction, he said, "Well, strangers, you've asked me to sing: let me tell you this, the very last time I sung in company, one and all were very glad when I had finished, and I calculate every mother's son or daughter here present will be the same this night."

"No, no, no!" were the cries from all, particularly the ladies; and 'Riar Jones exclaimed, in her usual shrieking tone, "Oh gracious! here's mysteries."

"Wal, I hope," continued Jonathan, "as I have just given you a bit of my mind with regard to Britishers in general, that you won't be so unmannerly as to interrupt me in the middle of my song; for I have a peculiar knack of my own, which you will say when you hear me. I candidly confess I shouldn't have attempted it, only you've used so much moral 'suasion, that I can't say nay; and after getting your promise that you will keep perfect silence, why here goes:—

"The-e young O-ba-di-a said to the old O-ba-di-a,
Oh-bha-dhi-ah, Oh-bha-dhi-ah, Oh-bha-dhi-ah!
And the old O-ba-di-a said to the young O-ba-di-a,
Oh-bha-dhi-ah, Oh-bha-dhi-ah, Oh-bha-dhi-ah!"

Young America might have saved himself the trouble of informing the Britishers about the style being his own, as from the peculiar way in which he drawled out the words, particularly the second and last lines, which were supposed to be the chorus, was quite sufficient to satisfy them of that fact.

After he had sung the truly poetic verse over two or three times, all became used to it, and the chorus, "Oh-bha-dhi-ah," rang through the room again; for

every one joined, and the shrill voice of Newpark, jun., might be heard above all others, helping his *quondam* Yankee friend of the States.

When the novelty had worn off, which took about seven or ten minutes, the chorus became gradually weaker and weaker, till it lessened down to the one single voice of Young America, who, as the others left off, raised his in proportion, and was bellowing to his full height, keeping time, as it were, with his long lanky arms, to give it greater effect and zest, with his peculiar and sharp-pointed features screwed up into an extraordinary shape, and looking altogether like a man who was not exactly *compos mentis*.

At first, all laughed heartily, and indeed Miss Jemima actually cried, it was so affecting; but as the constant repetition of the lines was drawled over and over again, with the only alteration of the words Young and Old, each and every one was becoming heartily tired, much to the satisfaction of the singer, who enjoyed it all the more, and quite rejoiced within himself at the ruse he had practised, in having made it a *sine quâ non* that he should not be interrupted.

This agreeable state of affairs lasted upwards of a quarter of an hour, those present keeping their promise and temper as best they could, when Outlaw, who whispered to Harry Acquilier that he could not stand it any longer, and would mesmerise Jonathan, immediately set about putting his threat into execution.

Directly that quick-sighted person perceived Outlaw staring at him with all his might, making all sorts of extraordinary signs with his fingers through the air and over his face, he stopped at once and said, "That is not r-i-g-h-t, sir-ree."

"Oh, it is quite fair," chimed in old Newpark. "We

are not making any noise, neither did we invite you to stop : pray, proceed."

"I'd rayther not," drawled out Jonathan ; " no tricks upon travellers, you know. But, however, I defy you or any other Britisher to mesmerise any one belonging to the States. Come, as I have heard a good deal about putting people off to sleep, suppose you try your hand on one of the young ladies here ; and if you succeed, why I promise you I'll allow myself to be operated upon."

Pink Muslin, Outlaw's sister, immediately volunteered, and was placed in a chair for that purpose in the middle of the room, with a dessert plate in her left hand, holding it by the edge, and the right hand underneath.

" Now, 'Riar," commenced her affectionate brother, " just attend to my instructions, and look serious for the short space of five minutes, if you possibly can : there, that will do. The first thing you will bear in mind is to keep your eyes fixed on mine, for if you once take them off, the spell is broken ; and also to do exactly as I do. So just to enlighten your naturally dull comprehension, I will give you a small lesson. Now, then, first put your right fore-finger under the plate, and make a circle of any size : that will do ; but press it as hard as possible, or else it's no use. Then cut the figure 8 in the air, or any other hieroglyphical figure that you see me doing, copying me as near as possible, touching your nose, forehead, or cheeks, as the case may be. To begin : attention, ladies and gentlemen, if you please."

All being silent, Pink Muslin commenced, and after rubbing the plate a few times, making sundry mystical figures in the air, and touching several parts of her face, she gave a deep sigh, dropt the plate very gracefully into her brother's hands, fell back in the chair, and went clean off, apparently, into a deep slumber, much to the

surprise and wonder of Cousin Jonathan, who stared with all the eyes he was possessed of, and mouth wide open. In answer to a question put to him, whether he was satisfied, he muttered out between his teeth the monosyllable, "Quite!" whereupon Outlaw mumbled a few unintelligible words, and cut divers figures in the air again, and at the word "arise," the somnambulist instantly stood bolt upright, gradually opened her eyes, and after uttering one of Miggs's favourite exclamations of, "Oh gracious goodness me!" reseated herself, quite recovered, amidst the warm congratulations of her numerous friends.

Young America didn't like the appearance of things in general, and would have willingly forfeited ten or a dozen dollars to have got well out of it. But as his word had been given, why if he broke it, those present would have but a poor opinion of the States; and a transient thought crossed his mind that perhaps, after all, he should come off victorious, and be able to show those Britishers that men of the States were not to be put to sleep so quickly as they imagined. With this pleasant idea running in his head, he placed himself in the chair 'Riar Jones had just vacated, for the purpose of being operated upon, with the most commendable *sang froid* imaginable depicted on his transatlantic features; and having been strictly cautioned by Outlaw with regard to his eyes being fixed upon his, with all the other little rules and regulations necessarily required, each took his respective plate, whilst the most breathless silence was observed by all assembled to witness the interesting performance.

At this particular and imposing moment, Young America, who, like his countrymen in general, was very sensitive with regard to nationality, could not help thinking how much there was at stake, and how that some-

thing dearer than life itself—the *honour of his country*—was in jeopardy, and depended entirely on himself; consequently, he felt rather nervous. But there was not much time given for thinking, as his lesson had already commenced. Down went Outlaw's right fore-finger to the under part of his plate, and described a circle; Jonathan following his example as nearly as possible, with a most sickly smile on his pale lips; a few cuts in the air; then up close to the parting of his hair—or what is called “widow's peak” in the “west countrie”—which the patient was adorned with; and from that elevated spot, both made a straight dash down as far as the tip of the nose.

Now, whether Outlaw had been lately reading Mills's History of British India, and had got as far as a description of the different Asiatic castes, no one could, with any degree of certainty, vouchsafe to say. But certain it is, a mark was made on Young America's lantern-jawed physiognomy, that resembled very much the oft talked-of and aristocratic insignia of the “proud Hindoo;” with this difference only, that it was black instead of yellow. Another touch or two on his cheeks made him most decidedly appear to those present as if he had completely lost caste; for the suppressed laugh was at last let loose, much to Jonathan's delight, who imagined it was at Outlaw's expense in not having succeeded in putting him off to sleep. At last, after Outlaw had artfully contrived to give him the few finishing daubs, he, with well feigned rage and disappointment, dropped the plate he was holding into the lap of his highly amused sister, at the same time saying, in a petulant tone, “It is no use trying it on any longer, 'Riar—he is not a fit subject for mesmerism.”

At this joyful news, Young America got up from his

chair, and skipped frantically about the room, first on one leg then on the other. Indeed, what with his smutted besmeared-looking face, dishevelled hair, and flushed cheeks, his extremely comical capers reminded the audience of the Red Indian, in that well known farce, "The Great Exhibition." Amidst the most convulsive laughter, in which Jonathan himself joined, Pink Muslin screeched out, quite in her own peculiar way, *à la* Miggs, "Why, I wish I may only have a walking funeral, and never be buried decent with a mourning coach and feathers, if the boy hasn't been and smutted his own self." Jack Middleton here entered with a large looking glass; and whilst placing it before him, repeated one of his copperplate sayings, "Receive instruction with gratitude."

The first glimpse which Jonathan gave at himself could be easier imagined than described. His features all at once assumed a crest-fallen appearance; and after casting a vacant stare round the room, uttered the impressive exclamation, "Well, I'm darned," with a most imposing solemnity; then bolted out of their presence like a flash of lightning, with the knowledge that men of the States are not exactly immaculate; for he had been sold, and by a west country man, too.

The remainder of the evening shall be skipped over lightly: dancing and singing formed the principal amusements; and Young America had returned, but was much quieter, and held Pink Muslin in great respect, who, he thought, was clever and witty. Midnight had gone by; and one o'clock was closely approaching before the weather was reported to have moderated. The ladies now proceeded to put on their bonnets, cloaks, and shawls, amidst the greatest bustle and excitement. When they had accomplished this arduous task, all assembled in the large room,

and asked old Newpark to give a parting song. Consequently, "Auld lang syne" was sung with great glee; after which, the cheerful old gentleman, his face beaming with smiles and contentedness, said he would recite "His Wish," which was as follows:—

"No glory I covet, nor riches I want;
Ambition is nothing to me:
The one thing I beg of kind Heaven to grant,
Is a mind independent and free.

With passions unruffled, untainted with pride,
By reason my life let me square.
The wants of my nature are cheaply supplied,
And the rest is but folly and care."

Loud hurrahs followed the merry old gentleman as they issued out into the open air, which only subsided to give place to the more exciting employment of arranging the different parties—or, as Young America expressed himself, "fixing themselves," to their likes and dislikes, in the different conveyances.

CHAPTER XIV.

How often has a ride to or from the "Derby" been described, particularly by the "penny-a-liners;" and although there is, to a great extent, a degree of sameness about it, yet one is almost carried away with the enthusiasm displayed on the occasion, to place it in his mind as originality. How that, at the commencement, the picture is nicely drawn of "the roadway," where every description of vehicle is to be seen, from the nobleman's magnificent and escutcheoned carriage, and four spirited

richly caparisoned horses, with a host of lackeys in gaily coloured plush and glittering liveries, got up in their very best for the occasion—to the small and less conspicuous donkey cart, the respectable owner of which, with his wife, had, for the day, thrown aside business, with all its numberless cares, and left his customers in his daily rounds to go without their greens on that momentous occasion.

Even that long-eared, but useful animal, the donkey, appeared to know by instinct that he was going to the most popular of national sports, “the Derby;” for see how he jogs along, requiring no instrument of torture, The short-handled whip is thrust peacefully aside in the bottom of the cart; and the iron spike, which used to tickle him, was left carelessly at home. Notice his ears, and see how knowing he looks, when any of those gay young sparks pass by, driving *à la tandem*, ask the impertinent question, with a horrid grin on their pale-looking *physiognomies*, of “Where are you *three* going?” The right ear is standing perfectly upright, listening, without a shadow of a doubt; whilst the other is cropped, as if wickedly inclined.

“Never mind, Joe; don’t answer the calico counter-jumpers,” cries the costermonger’s wife. “Better hear them than be deaf anyhow.”

After this salutary advice, away they trot again, passing their own instructive, but not very complimentary, remarks to each other with regard to the different riders. “See how straight that young puppy with a *mousetash*, Joe, has got his long over-grown legs. He doesn’t look round for fear of his collar; and I’d wager my old straw bonnet that I left at home, he couldn’t venture to trot for fear of losing his seat.”

“Pway, mwy good mwan, nwot to twouch your

cwap, as my horse is vewy spirited," said the individual they were just talking about, and whom they placed in their own minds to be a commission and shipping agent's clerk's assistant.

But the donkey cart, with its happy burden, must be left behind; and a good healthy gallop will bring us to the course, which, at the first glance, will almost dim the eye. For what a brilliant spectacle is to be seen there! Look at the grand stand, filled almost to suffocation; the gay equipages of every sort and denomination drawn gracefully up in the most commanding spots for viewing the eventful race. Cast your optical organs around the course: how thickly packed it is; one would think it almost an impossibility for even a wheel-barrow to cram itself in edgeways. But what is that little buz and stir there, close to the grand stand at this most intense moment, just as the noble thorough-bred horses are being placed for the start, on the conclusion of which depend so many thousands of pounds? Whatever can it be that would attract the attention of the cold-blooded man of the world; the confirmed spendthrift, who, in the hopes of retrieving his fallen fortunes, has now staked the last remaining remnant of it—*his all*—on the forthcoming event. And, if the truth was known, whose heart was throbbing and beating at that particular moment, under his showy-looking vest, with the wildest excitement, akin only to the professed gambler.

Even the bewitching *debutants* of sweet sixteen, with all her bright hopes for the future; her castles, built in the air; as well as her numerous little bets—for, young as she is, she has thus early learnt that science, and succeeded in making up a nice little book of her own,—her attention has been rivetted to the spot; and the old stagers, who had frequented the Derby regu-

larly every year ever since they had been let loose from their mamma's apron string, or first learnt to lisp their A.B.C., *they* also had actually turned their eyes, for the moment, in the same direction; for there was a sight which, once seen, was not easily to be forgotten.

A species of vehicle resembling a fairy chariot, drawn *à la tandem* by two high spirited Arab steeds, the silken rein being cleverly held by a most fascinating young girl—dressed *à la mode*—who seemed, by her juvenile appearance, to be still in her teens, but who had quite the mastery over those turbulent and fiery animals, as could be seen by the dashing style in which she passed through the crowd, who, *en masse*, made way on each side at her approach, just clearing the axle of this carriage and the pole of that one by a hair's-breadth; and then, as a *coup de grace*, pulling sharp up on the edge of an embankment, with such quickness and skill as almost to throw the noble thorough-breds on their haunches, but yet holding them in abeyance. Another inch further over would have precipitated the whole *sub cheeze*, down the incline. Coolly but gracefully handing the reins and whip to her liveried footman in attendance, and with a nod of recognition to her friends whom she espied at a short distance, she sprang lightly out on the green sward, with all the ease and elegance of an adept. That stir, before mentioned, was the buz of admiration that followed this clever feat of horsemanship; and the words, "Capitally done, bravo!" sounded far and near. Many were the inquiries made as to who she was; but no one knew for certain. One young rakish-looking fellow, it is true, thought she was one of "Astley's," and told the crowd so, which appeared quite to satisfy their curiosity.

Meanwhile, a capital start has been effected. There they go, helter skelter; but as it is not in our province

to state particulars of the race, as to whether it was an outsider that won, or give the name of his sire with his pedigree back several generations, we won't *blink* the matter, but simply inform the reader, who might feel a little interest about the costermonger, that he won a wager from his wife: for he laid two to one *on the winner*; and as a matter of course won, which chagrined his better half not a little.

Next comes the "drive home;" and however much it is to be regretted leaving that scene—which, after all, is but a picture of our own fancy—such a display of wealth, splendour, and beauty, in the height of their pleasures and enjoyments, with such a lovely day as even the most particular old weather-wise could not grumble at—yet it must be done; for we must return to our pic-nic party, who have a contrast in a long dismal and dreary journey before them, the night being as dark as a hedge; and the mists will be sure to hang over the high and stupendous peaks of granite that surround superstitious-looking old Dartmoor.

Now for the set-out. Many a word and tone of kindness were uttered that night, which made the blood thrill again, as it came welcomely to the hearer's ears; for it gave him confidence that she who said it had, in the darkness, and under the peculiar circumstances of their position, only given vent to the feelings of her own pure innocent heart. Such did Miss Jemima Newpark's lover feel. But what made Jenny Middleton stick so close to her cousin Harry? Why did she say, "You had better sit close to me, Harry, as I have a nice large shawl that will cover both of us." Where was Dick Norton all this time? Echo answered, in the sporting vernacular, "Nowhere!" That unfortunate and truly pitiable individual was kept quite at a distance.

"No, thank you kindly, cousin Jenny," was the answer from Harry Acquilier. "I couldn't think of being so presumptuous; besides, it would be filling a place I have no right to."

"N-o r-i-g-h-t t-o," interrupted Jenny, mocking the words, and drawing each letter out to its own separate length. "Well, I shouldn't have asked you, if aunt had not desired me to take care of the d-e-a-r b-o-y."

"Ah, ah, ah!" roared out Outlaw, coolly sitting down in the vacant spot. "Aunty's boy, isn't he, Miss Middleton? Never mind, we will take care of each other."

All by this time had fixed themselves. Ned Middleton had fled over to the vehicle which contained his dear Fanny; whilst his brother Jack had, by a clever stroke of policy, got rid of the urchins, and packed them off somewhere else, and had now indisputable possession of Pink Muslin; and in answer to a few uncharitable inuendoes from his London brothers, replied, in high glee, that "it shouldn't be his fault if they didn't drive direct to Gretna Green, as he was quite willing and able," which his fair partner—who screeched out, in an excusable tone, as if to account for his rather comical saying, "Such goings on to-day"—properly appreciated.

Just as all were ready and about to depart, Cousin Jonathan's voice was heard in loud dispute with "mine host," the only distinguishing words being, "D'ye think I'm going to be stuffed with squab pie and tantadily tart, you ugly specimen of an ourang-outang? I only wish I had you for a short time on the Mississippi river, in one of our extra-power high pressures—I'd soon take the tallow out of your unwieldy and ill-shaped carcass, and give your coarse-looking hide to the alligators, in the hopes that it would choke them."

Some one of the party hinted that perhaps, as Young America could not make himself comfortable at the inn, and be contented with the Cornish dishes, the Dartmoor mutton—which Mr. Newpark said was so tender and peculiarly flavoured—might suit his delicate and refined taste ; or better still, perhaps, he would come with them, if invited.

A deputation, with old Newpark at the head, having waited immediately upon that now infuriated individual, asking him to accompany them home, where the kind-hearted old gentleman said he should be heartily welcomed, and feasted like a king.

Young America accepted the offer with great joy, and took but a very few minutes to get his carpet bag and hat, telling the landlord, with much politeness, that “ he’d see him darned, and teetotally jiggered first, before he’d ever be kept on tantadily tart,” &c.

Having taken his place in the same conveyance with Outlaw and Harry Acquillier, the word was given *all right*, the reins let loose, and away they went at a good round pace. The rain, which had moderated a little, again came down in torrents ; but the Yankee refused the loan of an umbrella, saying he hated them with all the dislike of a sailor. Notwithstanding such bad weather, Jonathan was amusing himself, for the first quarter of an hour, by showing his delight and gratitude at being safely taken from a place where, in all probability, he would have been starved, at least so he thought ; and was cracking the knuckles of his fingers, wrist, ears, and nose with most extraordinary rapidity, closely resembling a person under the process of *shampooing*.

In answering a casual remark made by the elder Miss Hewton—which was, as a matter of course, echoed by the younger sister—as to how dreadfully thick and foggy

it was, expressing a hope that the beaten track would not be missed, and wondering how poor sailors found their way from one port to another in such weather on the wild and trackless ocean, he said, "Why, ladies, they invariably follow their nose, and keep their eyes open. And if you'll have no objection, I'll just relate a little anecdote about my uncle, who is, like myself, the *skipper* of a ship which flies the star-spangled banner, the terror of the world."

"Excuse me," interrupted Harry Acquier, "your face is very familiar to me. Have I not seen you up in the Crimea, or rather the Black Sea?"

"Not at all unlikely, my friend," replied Jonathan; "for I was up there conveying French troops from Marseilles. My ship's name is the Flying Cloud; and if I recollect aright, you paid me a visit at that port, but did not make a long stay."

"No, I should think not," replied Harry Acquier laughing, "for you frightened me away."

"How was that? Did I spin you that interesting but lamentable twister about the Virginia snake? or did I invite you to the *Chateau de Fleur* on a Sunday?"

"Oh, no; when I came up over the gangway, for the purpose of viewing your far-famed ship, which I had heard extolled to the skies, I addressed myself to you as her commander; and in answer to a question put by me, of 'What would she do?' I received the following reply, as near as I can recollect: 'Wal, stranger, I guess you're from that British steam-ship?' pointing to the one I had just left. 'P'r'ps you're going to sail to-morrow? I kalkilate you've good owners?' I gave you a nod, signifying the affirmative to all three of your interrogations, and might have smiled at the idea of your being so much like a west countryman—answering one

question by asking three others ; but again requesting the information which I required, you looked round, as if admiring your ship's symmetrical proportions, and then pointed aloft to her tall gaunt-looking spars, said, 'Wal, I calkilate, when the Flying Cloud is in good trim, and on a bowline—that is, with her yards braced sharp up, jest tiching the royal backstays, she will jest do her eighteen knots slick-o ; that is to say, with a capful o' wind in her dimity. But the spanking and lively craft, like all of us, has her 'culiarities ; for directly the wind frees anything, she gradually decreases her speed, till the breeze comes right aft, when with a rattling fresh gale after her, under hor single-reefed topsails, will only do her six knots, which is the same rate of speed she does when it's a perfect calm ; consequently, in making a passage or long voyage, instead of doing as other ships, going *with* the trade winds or monsoons, we arrange it so that she shall go *against* it: that's the way we make such clipping trips.' During the time you were talking to me, I stood perfectly petrified with wonder and amazement, my mouth wide open as if I had a kidney potato in my throat ; and directly you had finished, made a flying leap down into the boat alongside, taking exactly two strides to do it in ; and just as I had shoved off, recollect your looking over the taffrail, with a broad grin on your face, and said, 'Tell the Britishers it's a case of Full-and-by, always with us.'"

Young America laughed heartily at this lucid and bright account of himself, and exclaimed, in a tone of high glee, that "he'd be darned if it wasn't downright rich, and beat all the cock-fighting that he'd ever seen. But give us your fin, my brace of shakes : from the first moment I cast my barnacles on you, I knew there was a kind of freemasonry between us." At which they shook

each other by the hand so heartily, that it lasted at least five minutes, when Harry Acquillier said, jokingly, "Ah, you see, it takes the likes of me to know the likes of you." But perceiving that his over-sensitive friend did not exactly relish it, he recovered himself in the Yankee's good opinion by adding, "And it takes the likes of you, to know the likes of us."

Here old Newpark, who was on before leading the way, was heard to say, "I forgot to tell you this morning, ladies and gentlemen, that it was in the forest of Dartmoor where King Edgar, who was stopping at Exeter, sent to meet Orgarius, Duke of Cornwall, father of the beautiful Elfrida. Earl Ethelwold, the favourite, who married the duke's daughter, being there with his handsome wife on a visit at the time.

"This was done in consequence of the king suspecting, from reports brought to court loudly sounding the fame of Elfrida's beauty, that his favourite—who had been sent on a special mission to ascertain if report spoke true or not of her—had deceived him, in having spoken indifferently of her charms, and had asked permission, which was granted, to marry her himself, for the avowed purpose of enrichment.

"Ethelwold, suspecting the king's motive, unfolded to his wife the real state of the matter, and entreated her to dress herself to the least advantage, that in mean array she might be less regarded. Having renewed his entreaties and sealed them with a loving kiss, he hoped he had succeeded in his object, ill judge as he was of woman's ruling passion! Elfrida began to reason with herself upon the folly of concealing her beauty from a monarch, whose queen she might have been. "Must I needs befooled myself to be only his fair fool, who has so despitigly kept me from being a queen." Then, right

woman, she made the most of her beauty. She bathed, and anointed herself with the sweetest perfumes; curled her rich locks with care, and sprinkled them with diamonds; over her breast, pearls and rubies glittered like stars; and from her ears depended diamonds of the purest water, sparkling as she moved gracefully along, more angel than woman in appearance, to the presence of the king, whom she received with a grace and obeisance that looked like enchantment. Struck with admiration, and disgusted at the perfidious conduct of the man who had abused his confidence, the king went out hunting, and finding a retired spot where opportunity favoured, upbraided Ethelwold with his perfidy, and slew him. Edgar afterwards took Elfrida for his wife."

The old gentleman, perceiving a "tiddlewink shop" in sight—for they had got nicely across the moor, thanks to the polar star, which showed itself out occasionally, and kept them on the right track—brought his interesting and historical tale to an abrupt close; and Young America expressed his opinion of the English monarch in pretty plain terms, saying, "What a tarnation cussed fool he must have been, to have sent a third person on such an errand! I wouldn't trust my own brother."

Having pulled up and given the door a good hammering, after a short interval, the window was carefully lifted up, and the voice of an old woman, who was evidently in a great fright, was heard, with much trepidation, mumbling out, "It's no use your coming here; we haven't a farding in the house to bless ourzel's with: no, not even sufficient to tinkle on a tombstone; we be as poor as a church mouse; ye may jist as well rob a half-pay liftenant's 'ouse as to rob this, for there is nothing to prig."

"My good woman," commenced old Newpark, in the

midst of some laughter ; " do you take us to be robbers ? "

A voice was heard from the interior, saying, " Shut the winder, Granny : I'm sure it's them ; they always begin like that, trying to come the respectable dodge." The old woman, after telling old Newpark a bit of her mind, saying, " I know your voice very well, and would recommend you to have a care, and go home to your cross-grained old wife"—did as she was desired, and slammed the window to.

The hearty laughter that followed was only interrupted by the loud and obstreperous voice of the late Vice, who said, " Well, upon my word, to call my husband a robber, and me a cross-grained old wife !—cross-grained, indeed ! Let me get out, and I'll cross-grain her."

It was with much difficulty she could be held ; but her husband, who had once more mounted, alone pacified her by saying, soothingly, " Never mind, Nance ; we'll pay her out the next time we come this way." There was nothing about incompatibility with that pair. And one of the three fat red-cheeked young ladies—the sentimental one—whose mind had been quite engrossed with the king and the beautiful Elfrida, asked, in a lack-a-daisical kind of tone, what became of that lovely woman ?

After they had proceeded some little way again, and the old couple's ruffles had smoothed down, old Newpark answered, " She afterwards became a penitent for her numerous crimes, and died in the monastery of Wherwell, in Hampshire, covering herself with crosses, and in dreadful fear of the Evil One taking her to himself."

" Sarved her right, I guess," exclaimed Jonathan ; " she ought to have acted up to her promise,—honour and obeyed her husband."

"Do please tell us that anecdote about your uncle," interrupted the elder Miss Hewton, in which she was joined, as a matter of course, by her sisters, who chimed in, "yes, do tell us that anecdote."

Young America tried to excuse himself; but on Harry Acquilier saying, "Oh, do *give it them*," accompanying his argument with a sly nudge, he cleared his throat, and there being silence said, with a deöun-east nasal twang, "I was going to relate to you a tale about what my uncle did, when he got into one of those worse than pea-soup fogs on the banks of Newfoundland, gwine to St. John's in that island."—Hearing some one making a slight giggle, the speaker looked very hard in the direction it seemed to come from, and then added, in a precautionary tone, "Before I proceed any further, let me inform you, for your own 'ticular instruction and 'di-fi-ca-tion, that what I am about to re-late, notwithstanding you may think it is agin the very natur o' things in general, is facts, with no flies about it; and I will endeavour to tell it you *rightly*, and with as little palaver or cir-cum-lo-cu-tion as possible. The first, then, that I have to en-lighten you about is, the 'culiarity of those fogs, which is so thick that you can cut it with one of those bowie knives that you get in old Saratoga. Wal, uncle was jog-ing along as fast as he could under these difficulties,—not caring two straws more for the fog than the fog did for him, as he know-ed the place well,—when, turning round to his mate, who happened to be a stranger and Scotchman by birth—one of those *ne'er-do-we'els*—said, 'jist look and listen to me a moment. I'm going to take forty winks down below: never mind straining your *peep o'lights*,—you may shut them; but *keep your ears open*.' What do you think it was for?" exclaimed Jonathan, stopping short and turn-

ing particularly to his brother professional, who, after thinking a short time, scratching his head meanwhile, as if doing his utmost to unriddle it, answered,—

“I can hardly tell. I must candidly confess I am completely *non-plussed*. Many extraordinary questions have been asked by our Board of Sea Examiners; but generally speaking meet with pretty good answers, one of which I heard but a short time ago. A young officer, who was up passing for his certificate, having worked his navigation problems correctly, and answered two or three very pithy questions put to him on seamanship to his examiners’ satisfaction, was told that there were only two more queries to be asked him, which, if they met with their proper replies, would guarantee his *diploma*. After cautioning the poor unfortunate aspirant for promotion *to mind what he was about*, they said,—

“‘Supposing you were in command of a large full-rigged ship under all plain sail, and found yourself all at once completely surrounded with rocks and shoals, how would you extricate her?’

“After a second or two in thinking, the answer was, ‘Perhaps if you would be so kind as to inform me how she got there, I might be able to answer your question satisfactorily, gentlemen.’

“The next was,—‘You are at sea in a large ship, running or rather scudding before a heavy gale, with a terrific heavy sea following you, in which no boat could live a moment: the vessel, of which you are chief officer, staggering along under a close-reefed main topsail and reefed foresail, a cry is raised, which you find to be correct, *that the captain has fallen overboard*,—under those peculiar circumstances what would you do?’

“This appeared the easiest question asked, for it was answered immediately, as follows:—‘The first thing I

should do, gentlemen, would be to go and take possession of the captain's cabin, ring for *his servant*, and inform him, with all due solemnity suitable to the occasion, that he had *changed* masters,—lost his old one, and that *I was his new*.'

"But I am not quite so well up to the mark as he was with regard to *your* question, and cannot as yet see the drift or catch of it; for the orders I should have left, and which the aforesaid Examiners would have borne me out in it had there been any accident, would have been,—to keep a bright look out, keep the lead going, and in sighting any other sail a-head to put your helm, under any circumstances, hard to *port*; for these orders, if properly attended to, will always bear you out in any emergency; but I am interrupting. Pray proceed. With regard to your *conundrum*, which I most decidedly take it to be, in the language of the New York serenaders, *I gubs 'em up*."

"Wal, then," continued young America, "I'll jist enlighten you. Uncle had no sooner got his head on the pillow and closed his eyes, before his mate awoke him up in a great fright, saying in his provincial dialect, 'Mirther, skipper, wool ye coom up a wee on deck, for I dinna ken what all this cackling is aboot; and I may as weel at wanco tell ye, I wad'na left Aberdeen awa for the muckle of wages I get, had I kenn'd there was so much danger.'

"'Hold your jaw, you burgoo, oatmeal-eating son of a Heeland man,' cries uncle in a tarnation rage for being disturbed so soon. 'D'ye hear anything like cocks crowing?'

"'Aye, fules,' answers the mate, frightened out of his seven senses; and on uncle peeping up through the scuttle, he heard a *cock a doodle doo-o-o-o*. 'That's a

regular rooster,' says my uncle. 'I knows his voice,—let go the kellock (*i. e.* anchor).'

"When the fog cleared away, they were nicely at anchor in the port of St. John's, which so scared Sandy, the mate, that he bolted outright, and was never seen after, and at this present moment the *coon* is supposed to be one of those American *fillibusters* of ourn; and uncle still continues to grope his way about in dark nights or thick weather by the *cocks a-crowing*, for they never mislead him."

"How extraordinary," exclaimed the eldest Miss Hewton. "Wonderful," echoed the other sister.

"Very strange," chimed in all the others, much to Jonathan's gratification and delight, who felt quite pleased with himself at finding his anecdote *took*.

They had now arrived at the very worst and most dangerous part of their perilous journey,—the steep, narrow, and rugged lane that led down the dark gloomy and umbrageous woods of Liphill, to the black and now overswollen river underneath, which had to be forded. What a contrast was there to the morning previous, when those majestic and lofty trees, which had stood the blasts of centuries past, "each being in itself a living truth," spread a canopy of leaf, with its every-varying shades, over their heads in all sweet nature's loveliness; now it rained in torrents, and the little pic-nic party were drenched through. The very vivid lightning which came in frequent successive flashes, illumined the whole scene brilliantly up, making the overhanging bows of the grotesque and venerable looking chesnuts wear the appearance of as many ghosts in all their imaginary ghostliness, and the darkness during the short lucid interval more apparent; reminding one of the plague of Egypt, when a darkness came over the land that could

be "felt." The wind blew in wild dismal gusts, with terrific peals of thunder that seemed almost to tear the dark lowering clouds asunder, and made the horses snort again with fear. Notwithstanding the many dangers staring them so gloomily in the face, not a whisper was heard from those country girls with regard to their perilous position. For a few minutes at the commencement of this frightening, but pleasant descent, there was a dead silence, which was then broken by the elder Miss Hewton, who, as if to lighten the hearts of those present, struck up a song, in which her sister, as a matter of course, joined, and which sounded cheerfully even at that moment. It was—

"Begone dull care,—I pray thee begone from me :
 Begone, dull care, thou and I shall never agree.
 Long time thou hast been tarrying near,
 And fain thou would'st me kill ;
 But, faith, dull care, thou never shall't have thy will.

Too much care will turn a young man grey ;
 And too much care will bring an old one unto clay."

Here all the "lords of the creation," excepting old Newpark and young America, as if ashamed out of their nervousness, sung the last verse, which runs thus,—

"My wife shall dance and I will sing,
 So merrily pass the day,
 For I hold it one of the wisest things
 To drive dull care away."

At this moment, the wheels of the vehicle became locked just over the edge of the gurgling stream, which rolled slowly but steadily down in large circular eddies, resembling what the Chinese call *chow-chow water* (*i. e.*, small whirlpools). Not a second was to be lost, for had

it moved another inch, the precious burden would have been precipitated down the bank and into the boiling water underneath, when escape would have been next to a miracle. Out jumped Outlaw, and with his powerful hand grasped hold of the horses' heads, with a "whoop Boxer and Duke," and held them steadily until a flash of lightning showed him his position, when directing the driver to turn back the hindermost wheel, he simultaneously gave the shafts a small but quick jerk, and all was right again. They were extricated, consequently Chuck's Ford was reached safely, and with a little difficulty crossed, all right; but on old Newpark mustering his forces, he found that Jack Middleton and Pink Muslin were "*non est investus*." Where could they be? when were they last seen? were questions quickly asked, but not so readily answered, for no one knew; so after waiting for half an hour, halloing and blowing Dick Norton's bugle, and there being no signs of them, they determined to proceed, thinking, properly enough, the pair had reached that mature age when they were supposed to be able to take care of their own individual selves, both being pretty "wide awake."

Here the Nortons, Hewtons, Clamickses, Hollowells, Liphills, Collinses, Trehills, Newparks, and others parted, branching off to their respective homes, Young America accepting an invitation from Old Newpark to accompany him, and consequently proceeded to join him, but not before Amelia Hewton had put a question to him, as to "why he tied his neckerchief round her waist, when they were in that dangerous predicament, the wheels locking?"

"Wal, since you've asked me, young lady, I'll jist inform you. Had we capsized down that precipice into the stream underneath, I would have acted the same

weekers"—ruminating how to make the two ends meet on the forthcoming Saturday ; and notwithstanding the many questions put to him, could only articulate the interesting piece of useful information, that "Xanthers was a small river in Asia." Whether his being wet without as well as within was the cause of his speaking about rivers, or that he had used the letter X as a hint to them that he had finished with the preceding ones of the alphabet for that night, was entirely left to their own superior judgment ; but in a very short space of time, Auntie had them all properly cared for. So, having brought the little party safely back, and placed in good hands, we will reserve to ourselves, for perhaps some future period, a few remarks regarding the state of their dresses next day, as well as their healths ; and if we say the Londoners had all the gloss taken off their hats, it will suffice at present, for this chapter must finish the pic-nic.

CHAPTER XV.

Two or three days had passed after the events of the last chapter, and Cleveland had once more begun to resume its natural quietness ; for the pic-nic had already been talked of as an occurrence gone by. All the visitors had left, with the exception of Harry Acquilier, who still remained ; and it was in one of those walks which he used to take along the river side, watching the dwarf-like steamers and boats of pleasure that passed up and down over the smooth glassy-like surface of the flowing stream, listening to the covey of large white birds that came

hovering around, and which echoed again and again their own name, for the word "Cur-lew, cur-lew!" was quite distinguishable: that he was all at once surprised by finding Farmer Dick Norton close to his side, followed by a horse and cart, laden evidently with travelling boxes. One look was sufficient, for within the last forty-eight hours the man had greatly changed: his eyes, which were slightly bloodshot, had sunk in; and a little underneath the lower lash, was the unmistakeable crow's-foot. Neither spoke for the moment; but on Acquilier pointing, with a significant look, at the traps, he received the following reply:—

"Yes, Master Harry, you are right in your conjectures: it is all my worldly goods and chattels, and I'm off for the 'diggings.'"

"Off where?" exclaimed his companion, in a tone mixed with surprise and regret.

"Well, to Australia, then. For," continued Dick, in a low, melancholy, but dogged strain, "it's no use my stopping here any longer: it has nearly ruined me already, both in body and mind; and if you cast your eyes on that speck, throwing up such a cloud of smoke, just rounding the bend of the river close to the mine, you will perceive the steamer which will carry me to Plymouth, whence I take my departure for Sidney direct, in one of the Black Ball line of ships."

Here he came to a dead stop, close to a pebbly "hard," and proceeded without more ado, helped by the driver, to take his traps out of the cart, and when finished threw the man a half-crown, who eyed it for a moment, as if he had not quite made up his mind about accepting the same. Farmer Dick, seeing him hesitate, said, "Why doan'tee take up that piece of money, John? You've got to work hard for a day and a half for as much."

"If I wur starving, zur, I couldn't tich that piece o' silver for the life o' me," exclaimed the man in a sudden frenzy, turning his eyes away as if to avoid temptation.

"Why, you silly man, it isn't the first coin I've tendered he-e by many, and you never refused me afore."

"No, Maester, I know that. Don't be angered with me; I can't help it; mayhap it may be the last: that's what tiches me; and if I've a dirty smockvrock on, me-thinks it's no reyzon why the 'art that bayts undernayth it shouldn't have the zame veeling, the same pride, as the rich man's. Let me zee," continued he, musingly; "I've worked for he-e, fuss and last, upwards of ten years, and never wish to have a better maester; zaved ten 'arvests. But there, it's no use a-thinking o' bygones; do as maester used to tell us when ploughing, never to mind the vurrow behind, but keep our eyes on the ploughzhare and 'osses' 'eads on avore. God bless he-e, maester—I wish he-e well, and thanchee for me."

Master and man shook hands, as two honest men should; and after Farmer Dick had given the horse Dobbin an affectionate tap on the neck, John, with his charge, departed, occasionally looking back, till he was, by a turning of the road, out of sight.

Reader, let us tell you, that poor labouring man grieved so much at his master's departure, that it was reported by his neighbours he was *daft* for a twelvemonth after, doing most unaccountable things—such as, to borrow the informant's own words, "mangling a pair of shoes," "zotting a gander," and "datching a stone roller."

Both sat for a short time on a large deal box, neither speaking. At last Farmer Dick broke the silence by saying, "Well, I didn't think it would come to this."

"Nor I," echoed his companion. "If it is a fair question, Dick, what are you going for? Mind, I don't

ask out of mere curiosity : believe me, I feel a great interest in you, notwithstanding that we did not quite understand each other at first."

"What am I going for? Is that all *you* want to know? Then, here's my answer: Her has been the cause of it," at the same time pointing with his hand to Cleveland, which looked pretty indeed at that distance.

"But have you asked her, Dick?"

"No, for a wink is as good as a nod to a blind horse. But for pity' sake, Master Harry, doan'te-e mention that topic again; for it unmans me. Tell me some of your seafaring stories, do please: it will while away the time till the steamer comes."

"What will you have—a wreck? a fire at sea? or a collision? Only say the word, and I'm your man."

"Let it be a collision, please."

THE COLLISION.

"Before I begin, Farmer Dick, let me ask you to forget for the time being that you are here, and try to imagine yourself with me, as I proceed; for you will then feel a greater interest in my story, which, if it has no other merit, the least that can be said of it is, the groundwork is derived from facts, and consequently can lay some claim to truth.

"To proceed slowly—or, as we say in musical language, *andante*—the locality of this collision was the Mediterranean, about thirty or forty miles to the northward of the Algerine coast, and sixty leagues distant from the snowy mountains of the Spanish main, or far-famed Sierra Nevada.

"My ship's name shall, for convenience sake, be called 'Doublebows,' and I played a part in that magnificent floating town; for she was one of the finest steam

ships afloat, and had made many successful voyages between Southampton and Alexandria, on which line she was stationed, carrying the Indian mails—or, more properly speaking, Her Majesty's mails—in addition to a goodly number of 'fee-mails;' and on this particular occasion, what with passengers and crew all told, there were upwards of two hundred and fifty souls on board. Well, one night—or, as Paddy would say, one or two o'clock in the morning—when all this crowd of people, with the exception of the regular watch on deck, were below in their cabins, wrapped in sleep, myself inclusive, I was suddenly disturbed from my peaceful slumbers by hearing a thump, then a sudden escape of steam, with an instantaneous stoppage of the engines, a very unusual occurrence on board a large steamer. This latter piece of eccentricity thoroughly awakened me; for it has the same effect on my somniferous propensities as the mill at work has upon the miller—directly it stops, awakens him up. A very few minutes sufficed for my toilet. When I bolted on deck, I espied about a dozen people, like myself, in their nightdress, each one asking the other, with tremulous voice, what was the matter? still rubbing their eyes to assure themselves they were not dreaming; and simultaneously as the commander came out of his cabin, and inquired, in a clear, cool, but commanding voice, 'Where is the officer of the watch?' did the bald head of a man make his sudden and unaccountable appearance above the rail of the topgallant bulwark, take a quiet look around, then leaped on deck. He was evidently in the wane of life; and as he stood there, motionless, with his few remaining hoary weather-beaten locks glistening with the reflection of the full moon, he looked the *fac simile* of Neptune himself, arisen from the deep. At last he was surrounded, and in an-

swer to the question, 'Where did he come from?' muttered out, in a hollow sepulchral voice,

'NEWCASTLE,'

and then pointed over the taffrail to what appeared to be a dark black-looking object, seemingly not a great distance off.

"By this time, the Captain had gained all the necessary information, and his orders of, 'Brace the after yards by; hands by the life-boat's falls,' were no sooner out of his mouth, than with an obedient, 'Aye, aye, sir,' by the crew, it was accomplished.

" 'Are you READY?'

" 'All READY, sir,' was the quick answer.

" 'Then, lower away—let go abaft, unhook for'ard.'

"In the short space of five minutes from the time the engines stopped, was the boat lowered, manned, and away clear of the ship's side; for all fell into their assigned places, the little good-tempered doctor inclusive. And the commander, at that moment, was every inch the skipper; for there was no lack of energy about him. He was not one of those boot-admiring attitudinising kind of tars, with a wife-in-every-port kind of nose on his face; but was, joking apart, not a bad-looking fellow when he had his cap on: for, be it known, he also had a barren spot, or sheet of blotting paper, as it is sometimes termed, on the top of his bump of knowledge, supposed to have been occasioned by one of those sirocco winds, when he was laying to in a creek or inlet leading into Quarantine Harbour, Malta; verifying the old adage of taking off his cap 'once too often.'

"In pulling away in the direction of our unfortunate companion—for it was I who had charge of the boat—I could clearly discern, as the moon shone out brightly for

a moment, her outward appearance. Her mast and bowsprit were hanging over the side, and she altogether looked a perfect wreck. On approaching nearer, I could hear the voices of those on board; and as the lively buoyant boat mounted on the crest of a wave, I perceived lights moving quickly about in most unmistakeable confusion. A few more strokes of the well-plyed oars, and we ranged up alongside of her. 'Is the Captain here?' I cried out, seeing many eager and terrified faces looking over the bulwark.

" 'Yes, yes,' answered a man in his shirt sleeves and red cap on. 'I am the master; we are going down; my ship's fast settling in the water; you've stove the bows right in.'

" 'Come along, *Chips*,' I said, 'and follow me; bring your sounding rod with you.'

" It was fortunate, on my part, that I had taken the precaution of bringing the carpenter with me; for on examining the well, I heard the joyful sound of, 'Dry as a nutshell, sir.'

" 'All right, that will do; now examine the defects, whilst the Captain and I take a look at the chart.'

" On entering a small cabin or cuddy, a young woman's face met my eye. Evidently the Captain's wife—strange place for one of her sex to be in, and at such a time! But the most extraordinary part, which took my attention more particularly, was her coolness and presence of mind under such trying circumstances; for whilst all that ship's crew were running about in the greatest confusion and disorder imaginable, not knowing what to do or where to go, she, with her bonnet and shawl on, was following that Italian proverb of—

'*Asutato e Dio pasutero.*'

For lying on the table before her was to be seen a basket,

already heavily laden with the necessaries of this life; but with that praiseworthy forethought so characteristic of her sex, she still kept adding to the little store, no doubt thinking to herself that now is the golden opportunity, for soon, very soon, the bulk of it would be far beneath the surface. Observing that she noticed me so minutely watching each addition that she made to this now portable larder, I said, 'Pray, do not be alarmed; you are not required to make such preparations.' She answered, in a soft meek voice, 'There is no knowing, sir: nothing like being ALWAYS READY.'

At this moment, the carpenter having reported her not to be making any water, but that she was not safe to be left alone—for she had been cut down within a foot of the water's edge, and that happened to be her cut-water—it was finally decided she should bear up for Algiers, old Doublebows accompanying her within sight of that port. Bidding them good night, or rather good morning, I shoved off, and was soon back to my ship; and notwithstanding the cross-grained crabbed old *Bags* who had been dreadfully put out by his not being consulted about stopping the engines, had the agreement duly ratified by my commander. But I must bring my collision to a close, as I see the steamer has stopped and is sending a boat for you. So the next morning, about ten o'clock, left her within sight of harbour, which she safely reached; and after undergoing the necessary repairs, proceeded on her voyage, and arrived at her destination just in the nick of time, so as to take advantage of the freight market. So you see, Dick, often when we think the fates are against us, it turns out the reverse: accept this as a good omen in your case."

The steamer's little wherry now grated up the beach, shoving its little nose up close to where they were sitting.

Consequently, all turned to with a will, and soon placed Farmer Dick's dunnage in her. The two hurriedly shook hands, and bade each other farewell: they never met again.

But what was that note the Farmer had squeezed into Harry Acquilier's hand, in his last grip? and for whom was the sudden thought that ran in his head, as he stood there watching the lively little craft, as she quickly widened the distance between them? His curiosity was soon gratified; for on holding it up before his eyes, he discovered it to be addressed to Jenny.

"Poor Dick!" involuntarily escaped from his lips, as he beheld the forget-me-not seal, with a small patch of sealing wax, lettered on the back, "A Kiss." Having watched the tiny vessel round the corner and out of sight, he retraced his steps, in far from a cheerful mood, and the wild screech of the aforesaid birds did not in the least dispel his melancholy; for the "Cur-lew" now sounded quite different to what it did an hour or two previously, when his mind was more cheerful.

"A penny for your thoughts, Mister Soberlooks," cries Jenny, looking over the garden wall, as she observed him coming slowly along towards the garden gate.

"They are worth more, cousin Jenny, because they are about you. You needn't blush, fair coz.; for to use our friend Jonathan's phrase, 'It's a fact.'"

"About me-e?" returned she, drawling out the last word to more than its proper length, and with the most charming *naïveté* imaginable.

"Come, come, I know you are dying to know what it is about. I'll enter into a compact with you: if you do what I bid for the next quarter of an hour, you shall be as wise as myself."

"Done, agreed!"

"Well, I was thinking about you in connection with Farmer Dick, who has just departed for Australia." Seeing she was about to speak, he interrupted her by saying, "Not a word, please, but do as I bid you. Go and read quietly to yourself, in the little bower, this note, which he has deputed me to give you."

Jenny took the *billet doux*, and beat a retreat, with a most ludicrous expression on her rosy blushing face.

Now, with all due regard to the feelings of our young beauty, we must, for a short time, imagine ourselves a little robin redbreast, and perch on the top of a small twig, just behind "Miss Je-a-ne," as poor Dick used to call her, and not only notice how she looked at the address, and turned it over to see the seal—(didn't her eyes glisten when she observed the kiss?)—but also the contents, which ran thus:—

TO MY FIRST AND ONLY LOVE.

"I felt the pressure of thy hand,
And though no tear-drops fell,
I could not then my voice command
To say the word, Farewell.

I heard thee say those parting words
That bound me like a spell:
That touched my spirit's trembling chords,
Yet said I not, Farewell.

With me it ever has been so;
And why, I cannot tell.
But though I've felt its deepest woe,
I ne'er could say, Farewell.

I knew I ne'er could see thee more;
I felt my bosom swell
With grief I never felt before:
How could I say, Farewell?

'Twas calmly said, though tenderly :
 Cold on my heart it fell.
 And years of lonely misery
 Will follow that Farewell.

And now that word unto mine ear
 Seems like a passing bell.
 How earnestly I wish to hear
 The mournful sound, Farewell.

Then haste me to that happy land
 Whose wealth no tongue can tell ;
 And since I ne'er can claim thy hand,
 I'll breathe the word, Farewell."

DICK.

Ah, Jenny ! what did that tear drop mean that fell on the scrap of paper ? and what are *you* thinking about, as your tearful eyes are fixed on vacancy ? Is it for love ? or do you only pity him ? The little robin redbreast cannot tell : it only knows your little heart is beating so loud that it can be heard ; and as it does not possess the comforting power, will fly away, and not intrude on your sorrow.

But wasn't Ned Middleton surprised when he first heard of it ? " What a muff ! " was the only sentence elicited from him for half an hour afterwards ; and poor Dick's sudden departure had thrown such a damper on all their spirits, that a continuation of the yarn that evening was completely out of the question, so it was postponed, *sine die*, by mutual consent.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE departure of Farmer Dick Norton having had its regular run, a nine days' wonder, gradually subsided, until it at last, like all other phenomena of the same description, died a natural death, and the cousins were once more seated in their accustomed spot, and only too anxious to listen to the remainder of the yarn—or, as we should designate it, a few *naked truths*; for the artist had simply drawn the picture, without using any colours. Even the frame has been left unvarnished, the polish of "Our Own Correspondent" untouched. Neither had the second, or "agony" column of the "Thunderer" been borrowed. But we are interrupting.

"It is so many days since I left off," commenced Harry Acquilier, "that I am afraid you have almost forgotten."

"Oh, no," interrupted Ned, "it is all here," giving his forehead a tap with his hand.

"It was about Sir Robert's ship running the gauntlet of the fleet at Sebastopol," added Jenny, looking up for a moment from her work.

"You are right, fair coz.," exclaimed Harry Acquilier, laughing; "and now that I know we all take a fair departure, will begin.

"The commander and crew of that Transport, which belonged to the Mercantile Marine, were not contented in rendering a little timely aid to the British fleet; but embraced this opportunity of succouring their old friends, the —th, and luckily, their being ordered by the admiral to Balaklava gave them the opportunity they so much desired. All gave a day's pay, from the commander

down to the smallest boy, each tendering his mite for the purpose of giving their old shipmates a treat. Two large pies were made by the baker, the contents of which would have puzzled Monsieur Soyer himself; for they contained a little of all sorts, and the crust was very artistically pasted on—for Jack had carried his kindness so far as to show a little delicate attention towards those brave soldiers, by making the baker place on them, in large letters, the names of the different battles the regiment had won laurels from, the same as on their colours. One of these huge pies was intended for the commissioned, the other for the non-commissioned officers, in addition to which, fifty sheep were killed for the remainder of the regiment.

“To have seen the C——o’s crew, in all about one hundred men—jolly English tars, conveying this treasure up to the camp, for every man carried his sixth, with their strong athletic boatswain at their head, mounted on a grey charger, with his silver pipe and chain hanging round his sun-tanned neck, was a sight that, to have witnessed, would have made any Englishman *proud* of his native land.

“If double their number of Russians had intercepted them, and attempted to capture their prize, armed as they were with large sticks only—for they had still in their recollection the Cossacks after the battle of Alma—the rally those fine fellows would have made round those two huge dishes, would have been such as to call down the applause of their country; for they would have defended it to their last man. Charcoal, poultry, and salt were also amongst their presents; and no one could better appreciate those gifts than the badly clad, half-starved, frost-bitten soldier, who, worn out with fatigue and constant exposure, was almost disheartened, their

English-born pluck alone keeping them "alive and kicking."

"On their appearance in camp, with the boatswain in front leading, whilst the mate, who had been sent in charge, brought up the rear, regiment after regiment turned out, and heartily welcomed them, *cheering them right through the camp.*

"The meeting with their old comrades shall be passed over, simply saying it was cordial in the extreme. The fresh provisions were duly presented, but in such a manner as to remind one of the first epilogue to Pope's Satires, which runs thus:—

'Let * * * * with an awkward shame,
Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.'

"Previous to leaving their ship, they made a promise not to take a drop of grog till their burden was safely delivered, for fear of accidents; but once having given over charge, what with being heartily welcomed and drinking each other's healths, they became pretty well *primed* by the time they returned to the ship. However, as one of the number made a pretty good excuse for all by saying, 'It was the Rooshan hatmosphere that disagreed with them,' it was overlooked.

"This is only a single instance of the good then done by that branch of the service. Many are there which never were or will be chronicled; neither did they intend the same to appear before the eyes of the public: but are there not scores, aye hundreds, of our brave soldiers now living, who can testify to the truth of the hospitality shown them by those belonging to that vast Mercantile Fleet? Come when they would, welcome ever met them at the gangway; it being one of their peculiarities—a PRIDE, if you like to term it—in being ALWAYS READY to give honour where honour was due.

“ And this brings to my mind Sir Robert’s purser, who was a man endowed with more than his share of good common sense ; and I might add, the bump of human kindness must have been largely developed on his cranium, for contrary to the generality of *Dips and Moulds*, he strove to oblige any and every one, and was so far fortunate in succeeding. No matter whom—either those belonging to the ship or passengers, no difference was made ; and his kindness was truly appreciated by the troops which had been conveyed in the ship he belonged to, the —th, in particular, who made him a present of a gold snuff-box. This truly magnificent keepsake was the spontaneous gift of the whole regiment, from the kind-hearted and gallant Colonel down to the drummer boy ; and it is the purser’s greatest delight and PRIDE, when he shows it to any one, to say, ‘ The *soldiers* of the —th regiment gave me this : look at the inscription.’ ”

“ And not only did the Merchant Transport service perform their work afloat, but at times their judgment and practical experience were far from being out of place on shore, particularly with regard to the hutting of the cavalry in the Crimea ; and Lord Raglan must have thought that ‘ in the multitude of councillors is wisdom,’ for certain it is Sir Robert was *telegraphed* for from headquarters, for the express purpose of elucidating his ideas on the subject.

“ However, I won’t prolong the C——o’s doings to any great length, but will be as concise as possible in bringing it to a conclusion. Amongst her other deeds, she had been honoured by that celebrated and victorious general, Omer Pacha, in crossing to Eupatoria ; and Sir Robert, with his crew, was not backward in showing him all the attention in his power ; for they illumined their

ship on his arrival, and manned yards on his departure, giving that distinguished soldier some little idea of what he might expect from England's navy: for it would naturally occur to his intelligent and energetic mind, 'If this good-disciplined well-manned vessel is only a *Merchant Ship*, what must that nation's men-of-war be like?' not at all an unlikely question for him to put to himself.

"I have now given you, I think, an account of the C——o's peregrinations, as also a word or two about those belonging to her, previous to my joining that ship myself; and it was with no little degree of PRIDE that I found, on stepping on her decks, she was in every way worthy of the Company that owned her. But what had become of all those jolly tars that had waved their caps in the air on leaving Plymouth, giving three hearty hurrahs for 'Self-reliance and the auld country?' Alas! from the effects of constant exposure, broken rest, and hard work, many had gone to their last resting-place, a few had proceeded home invalided, and but one-half remained.

"Nearly all would, in after years, feel the effects of complaints, the foundations of which had been laid in the Crimea; and on behalf of a nation that provided NO INSTITUTION OR REFUGE FOR THEM WHEN THEY WERE AGED AND WORN-OUT, but left them dependent on the liberality of their owners.

"You may look, Ned; but it is a truth no one can gainsay."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed brother and sister in the same breath.

"Why are they not allowed the privileges of Greenwich Hospital?" inquired Ned. "Would not such an

application of the funds of that institution be in accordance with the intentions of its Royal founders?"

"I cannot answer the question positively," replied Harry Acquilier; "but I should certainly think the advantages of that Hospital might be more generally distributed; and I feel certain, if the boon was granted, it would strengthen the good understanding which at present exists between the Queen's and the Merchant Services, thus riveting together those on whom, in a case of *emergency*, the safety of the country does so materially depend. The fact of the matter is simply this, cousins—EVERY ONE HAS HIS PRIDE: the Mercantile Marine have theirs, and consequently would like to have an acknowledged position, being thereby raised in public estimation, with their services appreciated. Their antecedents will show that, in cases of emergency, they are ALWAYS READY, and could be rendered even more available for the service of the country, if required. How does the case stand at present? The Mercantile Marine hold no position, and if they commit an error—or, at least, if they are convicted of one—and deprived of their certificate, there is no other tribunal to appeal to; and perhaps those people who tried them do not know the difference between a log and lead line. But, pardon, I am getting too serious, so will relate what part of the play Sir Robert's ship acted, after I joined her.

"Our first trip was from Sizabole, touching at Varna for despatches, to Sebastopol, and thence to Eupatoria with horses and fodder. The news we brought the admiral was important—the death of the Emperor of Russia; and for some time after we were, in common with many other large steam-ships, employed in transporting Omer Pacha's cavalry across the Black Sea, and

succeeded in conveying them safely, with a loss of one only, to Eupatoria, their destination. After that service had been completed, we were next ordered to Marseilles, for the purpose of transporting the French army to the Crimea. In all, two regiments were conveyed by us ; and strange to say, at that period, the English Mercantile Marine were not only engaged in conveying the British and French armies to the seat of war, but the Sardinians as well. Consequently, should not the country that possessed such a splendid fleet be PROUD of the same ? as in that branch of the service, not only was the whole world eclipsed, but the resources of Old England brought out in very vivid and truthful colours before the other nations of the earth. But I am again trespassing. Let me now glance for a moment at the Allied fleet off Sebastopol, on the afternoon of the 22nd of May, the C——o being at the time on her way up from Eupatoria with two hundred and forty horses on deck, stowed in bulk, about five hundred Turkish soldiers on board, and the holds filled with fodder.

“ That day, as every one will recollect who was present, turned out fine in every sense of the word ; and, really, the sight afforded us was lovely in the extreme. On our port or left-hand side was the town of Sebastopol, the high mountains of the Tchernaya looming picturesquely in the back ground ; in front, the two British steam-frigates showed themselves in bold relief, as they dodged here and there, popping off a gun now and then as a means of annoyance to the Russians, who occupied those ugly-looking forts which, when one’s eyes caught sight of them, spoiled all the pleasure you had hitherto derived, by the unpleasant knowledge that, were it not for those strong fortifications, that ominous black cross and death-like looking flag would very soon be torn down from the

cowardly craft that had dared to fly it. As it was, the remainder of that Russian fleet was at the bottom of the sea, the topmasts of which only marked the degradation of that power which had, through too much ambition, or PRIDE, attempted aggression on a neighbouring state.

"But all at once, we found ourselves close to the Allied fleet. What a magnificent picture was there spread to our view! what a field for the amateur artist! The sky over-head was as clear as crystal—not a particle of cloud was to be seen. The wind had gradually lulled to a perfect calm, for not a breath of air stirred the heavens; and the different ships that formed that splendid fleet, as if to show that each had a will of its own, were looking different ways—some to north, east, and west; whilst others were pointed seaward, as if watching the numerous specks just on the curved line of the reflected horizon. But if those floating garrisons, with their heavy armament and glistening sides, were lurching lazily from one side to the other, there was that degree of unusual bustle and excitement manifested to a close observer, that would naturally make him ask, 'What's up now?' for although, on shore, all had the same quiet monotonous appearance, yet every preparation was being made on board for a sudden departure.

"Around the admiral's ship was a great number of small boats—gigs. In all likelihood, the different captains had rendezvoused there, for the purpose of getting their final orders.

"This was too much for Sir Robert's sensitive nerves, and no sooner was his ship, with the one in tow, anchored, than down boat (a jolly), and off he started for the flag ship, whilst all on board turned in for an hour or two—for they were heartily tired, having been up all the night previous, and hard at work during the day.

"At about ten o'clock that night, I, amongst others, was called to witness a terrific fire of musketry, that appeared to illuminate the whole French camp. Our tops, cross trees, in fact every available space aloft, was soon taken up by eager lookers-on; and the excitement, as flash after flash appeared, and volley after volley heard, was only quenched by the shrill whistle of the boatswain, and the hoarse cry of, 'All hands up anchor, a-hoy;' and the further additional and cheering piece of information from old *Pipes* himself, that 'we made one of an expedition to Kertch.'

"By this time (eleven o'clock), nearly all that vast fleet of ships were on the move; and although, from the darkness and haze that hung over Kamiesch Bay, they were not discernible, yet they could be heard in the death-like stillness of the night, as each one tripped her anchor, and steamed slowly away. Some passed so near us without being seen, that the different orders of, 'Easy a-head,' 'Port—steady,' 'How does the light bear?' &c., were plainly heard.

"At last, with the usual cheer of, 'Self-reliance and the auld country,' we tossed our anchor up, and proceeded slowly; but we had not gone far, when the look-out a-head descried a large black-looking object coming towards us. The order was given to stop the engines, and stopped they were instantaneously. Nearer it came, when the order of, 'Turn a-stern' was given; but some corn having found its way into the eccentric, alas! it could not be obeyed. Nearer and nearer—closer, until a sudden sharp crash, and the careening over of our ship, gave us an unmistakeable proof that we had come in collision with another vessel; for away went our bowsprit like a carrot, and our masts bent like coach whips. The confusion at this moment on board our ship can be better

imagined than described ; for what with the horses tumbling on the top of each other, and the unearthly yells of the Turks, disorder reigned supreme ; whilst our opponent, which turned out to be Her Britannic Majesty's line-of-battle ship, The Dashing Acre, forged slowly a-head ; and all the noise heard on board that splendid ship was the cool inquiry, evidently made by her captain, of, ' Is she all clear, for'ard ? '

" ' All clear, sir, ' was the quick and satisfactory answer.

" ' Then, go a-head slow ; right the helm ; brace the main yard up. ' The boatswain's whistle answered the last command.

" This was all that occurred on board that English man-of-war, which, with the regiment of soldiers she had embarked, numbered in all about two thousand stout-hearted Britons. Call ye that nothing, cousins ?—doesn't that make a man PROUD of his country ? "

" It does, it does ! " exclaimed Ned, rising, evidently excited, as he paced backwards and forwards. " I'd pay treble income tax willingly, rather than such brave men should go unrewarded. "

" What do you say, cousin Jenny, eh ? "

" I only say, " answered that young lady, working as hard as she possibly could, " that the more I hear of the bravery and indomitable courage of our sailors and soldiers, combined with their terrible sufferings, the more I value my time. "

" Why ? "

" Because I'm making them warm stockings for the forthcoming winter. "

Sure enough, Jenny had been knitting worsted stockings, as well as some warm mitts—may her shadow
'less.

"To resume," continued Harry Acquilier, "in about half an hour from the time of the accident, the bowsprit was triced safely up alongside. We proceeded in search of the ship we had had in tow, and with some little difficulty found her; but in passing her hawsers, they became entangled in the screw; so seeing the fates were so much against us, we dropped anchor for the night, and at daylight next morning proceeded with all the speed at our command.

"It was beautiful in the extreme, steaming close along-shore, passing the different pleasant-looking villages; and when off Prince Woronzoff's country palace, we overtook the combined fleet, which were proceeding slow, for the purpose of reaching the pre-arranged rendezvous at daylight the next morning. So we took our station with the rest of the vessels forming the expedition, and after passing the little coasting ports of Alouchti and Kaffa—forming the south-eastern boundary of the Crimea—during the night, we arrived early off Cape Takli; and at eight in the morning, the Allied fleet, having formed into line, proceeded under the leadership of their respective admirals; whilst the transports puffed along as they best could.

"It was at half-past eleven o'clock that the heavy line-of-battle ships, which were drawing a great draught of water, anchored about ten miles below Kertch; whilst the smaller craft proceeded on, accompanied with the numerous transports, as also the many large flats and ships' boats employed in disembarking troops. At about half an hour after noon, we anchored close in to the shore, in our own draught of water. It was at this precise moment that the first gun was fired, and by H.M.S. Highflyer, at a straggling troop of Cossacks, that for a moment showed their ill-conditioned heads over the brow

of yon hill. They immediately took the polite hint, and beat a retreat as fast as their horses' legs would allow them.

"Hitherto there was a degree of regularity displayed about the whole affair, that an eye-witness might naturally ask himself the question of, 'What does this mean? Is this tremendous fleet, that steamed gracefully up this smooth expanse of water, equidistant from each other, and without any visible means of propulsion, intended to invade an enemy's country? or is it only a sham fight—a review?' The arrangements were so full and complete in the most minute detail, that everything progressed like clock work. All acted that day as if the honour and glory of their country depended on their own individual selves.

"'Hurrah, hurrah!' cries the smallest boy on board, as the crew were busily engaged in lowering our boats, for the purpose of lending a helping hand to disembark troops. 'It is the Queen's birth-day,' continued the young urchin, throwing his cap in the air, as he heard several tremendous explosions take place, one after another, which reminded him of the home he had left for the first time, and fancied it must be the same Park guns that he had been accustomed to hear on Queen Victoria's natal day. The fortifications of Fort St. Paul and Yenikale had been blown up by the Russians, scattering the material far and wide. About this time, the scene was becoming exciting in every sense of the word. The troops had landed under the generalship of Sir George Brown, formed, and were advancing to the open plain above the pretty little village of Ambalaki, throwing out their well trained skirmishers in the most picturesque manner; along the shore were stationed men-of-war of various calibre, in accordance with their draught

of water, ready at a moment's notice to protect the landing party, if necessary.

"But to the northward, or entrance to the Sea of Azov, were all the telescopes directed; for just beyond the point was a Russian steamer, coming out of the harbour of Kertch, and steering towards Yenikale, in order to escape.

" 'Look, look!' cried a dozen voices close to me. 'The little Snake sees her.'

"True enough, the little English gun-boat was pushing on, steering a course to cut her off, heedless of the little mud forts close down to the water's edge, which threatened her instantaneous destruction. Onward they flew, steering, as it were, to one and the same angle; and if no untoward mishap occur, they must meet. Both the English and French squadrons were witnessing this little *coup de main*, in high expectation of seeing a fair ship to ship fight, when 'bang, bang,' came the unwelcome sound, showing by the smoke that it was from two of the shore forts.

" 'Cowards,' exclaimed the English.

" 'Poltroons,' echoed the French, as they observed the interruption; for they had begun to fire away in right good earnest, and the daring little gun-boat was still rushing into great danger, still pursuing her course, when three shots, fired in quick succession, determined her intrepid and courageous commander at once what to do: for the first went over, and fizzed along the surface of the water, telling him he was a long way within range; the second fell on her decks, dismounting one of her guns and wounding some of her brave crew; the third dropped short. She now rounded gradually to, with her broadside exposed to her antagonist, who thought of nothing but her heels, as she kept closer in for protection.

Two rounds were now fired by the little Snake : one appearing like a challenge 'to come on ;' the other as a defiance to those on shore, which had the effect of making the Russian steamer cast off and lose a small boat she had in tow, leaving her to her fate. To capture it, and bring the same from under those batteries, was no sooner thought of than beautifully executed ; and a short time afterwards, the dashing little craft was seen triumphantly tugging a long string of the enemy's vessels, variously laden, taken as prizes, towards the fleet, and was similarly followed by other vessels of her class soon after.

" The troops having reached the open plain, bivouacked for the night, taking every precaution against a surprise, in stationing their various outposts. So ended the 24th of May, 1855 ; and never was Queen Victoria's birth-day so well kept 'as by those forming the expedition to Kertch. Not a single mishap had occurred ; for Lord Lyons, the British admiral in command of the expedition, did not stand upon trifles. It was immaterial to him who anchored, or had the (doubtful) honour of jumping on *terra firma* first. His nation could afford to allow the tricolour a little scope for their vanity ; but in the whole of the arrangements that day was to be seen the policy and tact of a great and magnanimous commander : for every petty jealousy and nonsensical nothings were thrust carefully aside, or in all probability never once thought of.

To succeed in what he alone had originated, for the purpose of showing the proud Autocrat that the British Lion, if once insulted and fairly aroused, could throw terror and dismay into his despotic self-serving country, was HIS PRIDE—the one grand object that appeared to animate him throughout. And the loyalty to his Sovereign was amply set forth in the day he had

chosen for that auspicious event, which, as I have said before, went off well, or, if you like the word better, with great *éclat*, for the tremendous explosion of the enemy's forts served as a *feu de joie* in honour of the Queen of England's natal day.

"The next morning, at sunrise, the Allied army struck tents, and marched through the town of Kertch, meeting no resistance whatever on their way; and then round to Yenikale, where they took up their quarters for good: that isthmus, or neck of land, being of material consequence to the Allies, as it commanded the entrance into the Sea of Azov, where a fine field was opened out for our small craft, with their maiden commanders, to explore, giving them an opportunity of distinguishing themselves, which, as you know, they most decidedly did.

"That same forenoon, I landed, with some others, at Ambalaki, where we of course found all the cottages forsaken. The only living things seen in those pretty little white-washed domestic-looking habitations were a stray chicken and a young kitten, which, in the hurried departure of their late occupiers, had evidently been forgotten. The low melancholy mewing of the latter, and the solitary dejected look of the former, sent a chill into my very heart; and as I scanned my eyes around the now lonesome dwelling, where everything had the appearance of former comfort and luxury, which honest industry had dearly bought—for the snug little outhouses yet contained all the implements of husbandry, and the crops outside looked thriving—my head grew giddy; I felt sick at the sad picture, and mechanically asked myself the question of, 'Is this the effect of war?' Here followed my wish, 'Would to God we were all Quakers; then we should be at peace with all mankind.' Even on leaving this desolate and dreary spot, my thoughts still kept

dwelling on the scene ; for at every footstep that I took, I found myself treading on the fruits of the poor man's labour—the newly cut hay, that had only seen the scythe the day previous, and was now laying in rows, ready to be gathered. But, alas ! the mowers had departed : there it would lie and rot.

“ ‘But what noise is that in yon villa ?’ cried one of my companions, as a roar of laughter came forth.

“ On entering a very respectable-looking house, which had evidently belonged to some one mixing with the middle class of society, our eyes caught sight of a scene, which was at once saddening but laughable in the extreme ; for in the tastefully furnished drawing room were assembled a motley group of sailors, with their dirty shoes and rough weather-beaten faces ; a strange group in such a place as that. And they appeared to be enjoying themselves beyond description. One of their number, who appeared to be the Joe Miller of the lot, was seated down to a nice French piano ; and as one of his messmates was politely fanning him, he employed himself in turning over the leaves of a music book, as if looking for his favourite song ; but having exhausted them without doing so, he exclaimed, in a lackadaisical simpering tone, at the same time giving utterance to a slight cough, ‘Pray, ex-cuse my bad cold, as also the accompaniment, as I cannot find my own music book.’

“ ‘Go on, Miss Molly Malone,’ cried a dozen voices ; ‘don’t look for compliments.’

“ Having placed both hands on the extreme octaves, he commenced, in a very fair voice, the following ditty ; and at the end of every line, pressed the notes of the piano twice :—

“ ‘Twas post meridian, half-past four,	[Clung, clung]
When signal I from Nancy parted ;	[Clung, clung]

At six, she linger'd on the shore,	[Clung, clung]
With uplift hands and broken-hearted.	[Clung, clung]
At seven, while taut'ning the fore stay,	[Clung, clung]
I saw her faint, or else 'twas fancy.	[Clung, clung]
At eight, when we got under weigh,	[Clung, clung]
I bade a long adieu to Nancy.	[Clung, clung, &c.]

“ His delighted comrades gave him a loud *encore*, and begged him to go on ; but he, with a great deal of what the French call *mauvaise honte*, declined proceeding any further, informing them, in the simpering tone of a young school girl he was trying to mimic, ‘ I have not made my *début* yet, and therefore am not in the habit of singing in public, hence the bashfulness and extreme nervousness you have just witnessed.’ Here Jack arose, made a graceful curtsy, and retreated, leaving the instrument to the tender mercies of his late admiring audience, who, after getting all the noise they could out of it in their own peculiar way, commenced tearing it to pieces, for the purpose of satisfying their craving curiosity of ‘ where did the music come from.’

“ The knowledge they so much thirsted after having been obtained, each betook himself to his own peculiar fancy,—closely examining the chimney-piece ornaments, lounging on the couch or settee, the rich satin damask chair, sitting cross-legged over some needle-worked ottomans, or squatted pell-mell on the top of the walnut table ; three or four were playing hide and seek behind the, as yet, unspotted white Indian muslin window curtains, whilst the Joe Miller was admiring his figure in the handsome pier glass, giving himself, for the amusement of his friends, all sorts of coxcombry airs, telling them in a very affectatious voice, that he was in want of nothing, as the only relative he had left was a rich old aunt, who has always been in the habit, so she says, of getting her

virtue (vertu) from Paris, and her bigotry (bijouterie) from Rome.

“ The act of demolishing having commenced, we left ; and after taking a peep into what appeared to be a lady's *boudoir*,—where Jack appeared to be in his glory, if we could judge by the number of costumes he was examining,—we departed, issuing out at the front door through a tastefully laid-out flower garden. In walking away from that scene of riot and confusion, I asked myself the question of how should we like our comfortable homes desecrated by the invading foreigner ? Can this be the effect of war ?

“ A quick step soon brought us to the top of the hill, where the sight which presented itself well repaid us for our trouble ; for at the base of an undulating deep ravine, which was covered with the richest verdure, lay the ancient and picturesque-looking town of Kertch : a little beyond and to the right was Yenikale ; and the noble sheet of water between, which formed the harbour, mirrored beneath the eye from an elevation just lofty enough to command the whole without confusing distant objects. To the south eastward appeared the allied fleet, dotted over like small specs on the surface of the wide expanse of sea which bounded the splendid Bay of Kertch ; and along shore the foliage looked rich in the extreme. Here art and nature were combined with great effect : bright waters, dark woods, black war ships, ruins of forts, creeks, and the Euxine, are displayed in a rich harmony of landscape that is scarcely to be surpassed in any other part of the whole wide world ; and whilst my mind was filled with indescribable pleasure at the view, a sudden thought crossed my mind, that the inhabitants of that town, the country villas, and those peasants' cottages which commanded such scenery, had

fled, and that the habitations were untenanted, and perfectly deserted.

"This is the effect of war, I muttered to myself, as we retraced our path back to the ship, strongly impressed with one great truth, that the blessings of peace cannot be too highly extolled; for here was the misery and sufferings of a people, which I have but faintly portrayed, brought on by the too great ambition of a single man, the Czar, or ruler, of that country; but I'll quote that Latin proverb, which says,—'*Sit tibi terra levis.*'"

"Having at length regained my floating home, I will, with your permission, rest awhile on my oars."

CHAPTER XVII.

ONCE more, and for the last time, the trio were seated down in the pretty little bower of Cleveland, for the purpose of closing the yarn, or a few truthful sketches from the Crimea, witnessed by the one that was giving the delineation, who, having become convalescent, had given out that he must return home and present himself to his father and mother, who imagined he was all this time in the Black Sea.

His reasons for taking shelter in this quiet retreat must be obvious to the reader, he being not only kept away from any undue excitement that would have been prejudicial to his then weak state of health,—for the constant exposure and over exertion he had been subjected to whilst employed in the *Crimean Naval Trans-*

port Service had so undermined his nervous system, that on his first arrival at Cleveland he appeared, with his *game* leg, to be in a very debilitated state,—but also from the too great temptation of visiting her whom he felt the same affection and love for as ever, do what he would to prevent it. No matter which part of the world he visited, or what dangers crossed his rugged path, there appeared that meek but heart-stricken form, with uplifted, supplicating hands and dejected-looking face, right before his eyes. Was it in London, France, Malta, or the Black Sea, there it was just as he left her at the Plymouth railway-station. Did he mix in any scenes of pleasure, the apparition was sure to damp his spirits. In the wild storm, the collision, or excitement of the various scenes witnessed in the Black Sea, or even in the dismal cold night-watch, the spectre would surely be there; and as the wind howled its melancholy tone through the black-looking rigging, the well-known words of "*Thy Curse shall be to Think*," was distinctly heard by his imaginative ears.

It seemed as if the hand of Providence had guided him during his long absence from her, bringing him back again by an unforeseen chapter of incidents over which he had no control. When he left, it was far from his intention of returning, being well assured he might just as well give three cheers and jump overboard, as to appeal to old Rennoldson without the conditions being fulfilled, *the promotion and the Transport Medal*.

But *apropos*. "When I look back and think of the many pleasant evenings," commenced Harry Acquilier, "that I have passed in your company here in this dear homely spot, and of the many little acts of kindness received at your hands, you will, I know, give me credit when I say, the day of parting will be looked forward to

by me with dread ; but go I must, as you both well know, for my occupation lies—

‘ O’er the glad waters of the dark blue sea ;’

and as Byron in his *Corsair* says,

‘ Ours the wild life * * * still to range,
From toil to rest, and joy in every change.’ ”

“ Now you’ve commenced quoting that author, you had better give those lines written on the fly leaf of that book,” interrupted Jenny, looking up, with her eyes most decidedly moistened with—what—well, it looked very much like *crocodiles*. The little robin redbreast cannot divine what it was for.

But hush : Jenny has reached her cousin the book. Why did she run away and fetch it ? The robin redbreast is bewildered, as Jenny knows the verse by heart ; but here it is,—

“ Here’s a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate ;
And, whatever sky’s above me,
Here’s a heart for every fate.”

“ Come, come,” exclaimed Ned ; “ it is time enough to talk about your going yet. Besides, I don’t like to hear it. Crack along with the yarn. You left off last about Kertch.”

“ So be it,” answered his companion musingly, and then began.

“ We remained at Kertch three or four days discharging Turkish cavalry into large flats. During this time, Sir Robert was moving about, making himself generally useful ; and, indeed, one day the Admiral, accompanied by his captain, in a small steamer, stopped, and invited him to reconnoitre and examine the various forts, which Sir Robert, you may depend upon, immediately accepted,

returning in the evening,—the kind-hearted and brave old Admiral not being at all too *proud* to stop abreast his ship in order to allow him to get into a boat.

“The next evening we left with despatches for headquarters, and after remaining at Balaklava for several days, commenced taking in ammunition, heavy guns, shells, mortars, and about three hundred barrels of gunpowder. Just as we were about to sail, Sir John Campbell and staff joined us for passage to Kertch; and the whisper ran like lightning through the ship, that there was to be an expedition to Anapa. Three cheers for ‘Self-reliance and the auld country’ again pierced the air, and away we went. But the sound had no sooner died away, than a strange but melancholy sight met our view; for coming towards us was a number of boats, pulling with muffled oars, and in procession, which, by the slow measured strokes, and flags half-staff high, trailing weepingly in the discoloured dirty-looking water, told us but too truthfully that it was a funeral.

“‘Stop her,’ said Sir Robert; ‘down with the ensign half-mast,’ which was immediately obeyed.

“‘Poor Admiral Boxer,’ exclaimed Sir John Campbell, taking off his cap; which mark of respect to the dead was followed by the whole of that ship’s company instantaneously; and as the mournful *cortège* passed us, there was a deep silence throughout, which was only broken by the booming along the sea of a gun fired at short intervals, that reverberated strangely amongst the hills of Balaklava, extending as far along as the monastery of St. George. In looking at the direction it seemed to come from, I observed the smoke hanging heavily around a large English steam Merchant Transport, which was doing all in her power to pay due reverence to the lifeless corpse of the great man that had just been borne

away from her decks to his last resting place ; and the only prevailing sentiment that entered the minds of those Merchant commanders, who followed in their boats, was, '*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*'

" 'Full speed,' and off we went again, each one trying to shake away the melancholy the late scene had left ; and after some little time, partially succeeded.

" We arrived at Kertch the day after ; and it was then decided that Sir John Campbell should proceed to Anapa in Her Majesty's ship Hannibal. Consequently, that vessel of war left for that purpose ; and after being absent a day or two, returned with the news that the Russians had evacuated that town to the Circassians, so our work had been done for us. During this time, the three hundred barrels of gunpowder were still on board, stowed in casks, and placed down one of the holds, and not, as in a man of war, in a properly fitted magazine. Think you there was no danger experienced in that Merchant Transport ? Most decidedly, there was ; but no one on board the C——o expressed a fear, if even he thought of one. At last, it was discharged into a small steam tug, and conveyed safely on shore at Yenikale.

" During our stay at this place, many excesses were rumoured to have taken place ; but as I did not witness them myself, never once entering the town, I cannot vouch for their accuracy, so will throw a veil over it. I do not mean committed by us, but by our ally, the Turk. Certain it is, a guard of English soldiers was applied for by a few of those inhabitants who had returned, trusting to the clemency of their enemies, and for the purpose of protecting their property against pillagers.

" The affairs in general being pretty quiet and settled down, a regiment of Highlanders was ordered away, and

embarked on board the C——o by that ship's own boats, for conveyance to Balaklava, where they arrived safely in due course of time, accompanied by the brave general, Sir John Campbell, whose services had not been required at Anapa ; all of whom were disembarked, and marched off to their assigned post, fronting the ominous black-looking walls of Sebastopol, whilst we remained *in statu quo* for a day or two, granting liberty to those hands who left England in the ship, for the purpose of giving them an opportunity of visiting their old friends in camp, the —th.

“At last, news came that there was to be an attack made by our soldiers on the strong, far famed, and deadly Redan, and that the assaulting party was to be led by our late shipmate, Sir John Campbell, whom all loved and respected much—for during the many days he he had been with us, we had an opportunity of forming some little opinion of his general character. He was a thorough English soldier in every sense of the word, embracing all those good qualities so necessary for any one belonging to that profession, being brave, patriotic, energetic, and loyal in the extreme ; and as for his good nature and kind-heartedness, perhaps those aides-de-camp who stuck to him so close during that deadly and unfairly-matched conflict, can better bear testimony to than I can. Suffice it to say, he won all hearts in the C——o ; and it was with a degree of sorrow mixed with *pride*, that the crew heard of his being selected for that responsible and dangerous post. It was just like having to lead ‘a Forlorn Hope,’ for it was certain death to the one who undertook it.

“The night of the assault arrived : all were on the *qui vive*. Sir Robert, with several of those belonging to his ship, were on shore. The former spent all that

night with the gallant chief who was to lead to victory or else die in the attempt, helping him to put his affairs in a proper train should things turn out for the worst : his will, with numerous other papers, signed, witnessed, and duly sealed, &c.

“At three o’clock, a.m., heavy firing was heard, with successive volleys of musketry, in the direction of the camp, so the ship’s log stated in its usual matter-of-fact style. Would that had been the whole : but at break of day, one after another came back with dejected looks and downcast eyes, that told at once a tale much plainer than words could utter, or the most flowery language describe. We had lost, and poor Sir John Campbell was one of those who shed his heart’s blood for his country. One had seen it from that look-out, and two or three or more had witnessed it from another ; consequently, the whole of the attack was seen by the C——o’s crew in its various phases. All were unanimous in one general theme of praise for that gallant little band, that did their best so nobly and courageously against such overwhelming odds, keeping up such a front under the most disheartening circumstances ; for, poor fellows, they were literally mowed down, there being no protection or cover for them, whilst their enemies were ensconced safely behind their embrasures.

“The jacks from the Naval Brigade did their part nobly, and with the greatest *sang froid*, placing the scaling ladders against the embattlements with such expertness and jocularly, as if it was a case of ‘follow my leader,’ showing that not only were they up to their work afloat, but, if properly trained, do their duty on shore also.

“‘Did you see poor Lord Raglan riding slowly back after it was over?’ questioned one of the other, ‘with his

well-shaped and manly head hanging droopingly down, as if the thoughts of those brave spirits that had just passed away,—leaving but the mortal clay behind, which was yet still warm,—had been too much for his soft meek feeling heart, and noticed his staff following silently behind, knowing too well this was not a time to pass any of their sympathetic remarks?’

“‘I did, I did!’ exclaimed two or three together; ‘and it’s I that would lay my life down for that kind-hearted brave old General. I believe he looks on his army as if every soldier was his own child. D’ye hear how he visits the hospitals, and scans the sick list every day? Tisn’t he that worries them with court martials, although perhaps many deserve it.’

“Such were the remarks which fell from the lips of those who had witnessed the *coup de main* of the 18th of June; and all that we could recollect regarding that great man, Sir John Campbell, who played so conspicuous a part in the affray, was his kind condescension and amiability at all times whilst on board our ship as a passenger. The sword that we had handled belonging to him, with its now well-known history, was still in our mind’s eye: the hearty pressure of the hand was almost still felt as he said the word ‘good-bye.’ Little did we think at the time, that it was ordained he should so soon pass away; but he is gone, I hope, to that country where peace reigns undisturbed, and the traveller is at rest.

“We remained there but a few days after, having received orders to proceed to England with invalids. Our ship not having been home since she left Plymouth with the —th, and now that such a deep gloom had taken possession of all on board, on account of the late mishap, perhaps it was just as well.

"Having received on board many invalided officers (Crimean heroes), we weighed from Balaklava, and was once more homeward bound. But our anchor was tripped without the usual cheer, 'Self-reliance and the auld country;' and all hands walked listlessly round at their capstan bars. They had been disappointed, for they had made up their minds not to show their faces in old England till Sebastopol was in our hands. Poor fellows, they didn't stand alone in this respect.

"Nothing particular occurred on the way home. It was the same monotonous every-day go-ahead routine. Those that breakfasted with you met at lunch; the same faces sat opposite each other at dinner, then to tea and grog. Malta and Gibraltar were touched at, it was true, which served as a break in the trip; but the voyage appeared long, as all on board were anxious to hear how the affairs were going on at and around Sebastopol. At last, in the ordinary course of time, the English Channel was reached; and, sure enough, a *Scilly* pilot-boat hove in sight, which created a great commotion on board, for all were in high glee at the idea of getting that great treat after a long voyage, an *English newspaper*. And perhaps some great and glorious battle had been fought, who knows. Whilst all these visionary ideas were running as quick as lightning through their minds, the ship's head was pointed towards the stranger; and in a very short time came up with her. Sir Robert put the speaking trumpet to his mouth and enquired, 'Have you an English newspaper?' Immediately one was held up as an answer; consequently, the engines were stopped for the purpose of procuring it. To launch his little tiny *dinghy* and row nearly alongside, took a very few minutes; when the following pithy colloquy ensued between the Pilot and Sir Robert, the former, meanwhile,

keeping at a respectable distance, with the paper placed luringly on the thwart of his boat, and just within sight.

"*Pilot* (inquisitively)—'I reckon you be going to Southampton, be'ant he-e?'

"*Sir Robert* (ironically)—'Yes we be-e. Come alongside.'

"*Pilot* (seeming not to hear)—'Be he-e purtey well off wi' fresh provisions and vegetables. If you be'ant, I'll gie he-e a bucket o' spuds for a bucket o' tay.'

"*Sir Robert* (angrily)—'We don't want any of your spuds: give us the newspaper.'

"*Pilot* (soothingly)—'Doan'tee get in a fluster, Cappen; but have he-e got such a thing as a piece of pork or salt beef, as me and my mate-e have been out a day or two longer *nor* we expected, and getting a little short ways like,—'

"*Sir Robert* (impetuously)—'Yes, yes.' [Aside to one of the crew, take two bits out of the harness cask, and pitch it into his boat.] 'There you are; now come alongside.'

"*Pilot* (touches his cap)—'Thanke-e, Cappen; thanke-e. Have hirrey one o' you gents in the waist got a bit o' 'ard? I havn't tasted a bit for ever so long without the duty been paid on't, and then tisen't near so sweet.' [Here followed a knowing wink.]

"*Sir Robert* (in a downright rage)—'Full speed. I'll report that fellow at the Trinity.'

"The pilot hearing the order with the threat, sheered himself alongside, and handed the much coveted paper, in return for which some one threw him three or four sticks of tobacco; he then shoved off, with a queer expression on his weather-beaten face, which all could well interpret. After he was clear and some little way astern, lo, and behold! when we were all in breathless suspense,

waiting to hear some great and soul-stirring news, the reader exclaimed, with a look of disappointment on his face which was soon shared by his expectant listeners, that it was *a month old*.

"We all rushed simultaneously to the stern, and bent our fists at him, which he appeared to understand; for he stood up in his small cockle shell, pulled the forelock of his hair, and bellowed out at the top of his voice,— 'We be Scilly pilots, Cappen: very *silly*, we be.'

"It was a decided sell, and taught some of us a lesson that will not be forgotten for some time. An hour or two after, a Portland boat boarded us, and we had the satisfaction of reading a newspaper that was only two days' old, and which gave us the startling and ever-to-be-lamented intelligence of Lord Raglan's death.

"No one on shore can form the slightest estimation of how that nobleman's demise was received on board the English Merchant Steam Transport C——o, both by the crew and those invalided soldier officers who were passengers. There were some amongst the latter that had received kindnesses at his hands, which would only be forgotten when they ceased to exist. No General could be more universally beloved by his army than he was,—an assertion which I defy any future historian to contradict.

"'Poor Lord Raglan! What an untoward event. He could be but badly spared at this crisis. England cannot be sufficiently aware of her loss.' Such were amongst the many exclamations that fell from the lips of one who, at this present moment, is appointed to one of the chief military commands in the Mediterranean. Excuse my dwelling so long on that brave commander's merits, but if I were to continue talking to you for the next month, enumerating his many virtues, anything that

dropped from my lips would fall far short of the mark ; and the sentiments that my own heart has prompted me to utter, would, if known, find an echo in the many thousands who knew or had the good fortune of being under him.

" This, cousins, is the close,—and I think you will allow a most fitting one,—of my yarn, a few truthful sketches, or anything else you like to call it, of scenes witnessed by me since I left England."

" But surely," interrupted Jenny, with a disappointed look, " you will not come to such a sudden conclusion ?—not even bringing your tale to Plymouth, from whence you set out. Perhaps it might be the best part, who knows. I do beseech you to go on, and tell us what characters crossed your path in Southampton, London, or elsewhere."

" Perhaps you'd like me to go a little further, Miss Jenny, and give my opinion as to what rates the ' Great Sinking Dock Company ' ought to pay ; or say a word or two about *the* Railway,—how that the second-class carriages had been much improved of late, by an extra cushion placed at the back. Anything you like. I'm not at all *proud*."

" No, no ! you are going to extremes now."

" Anything to please you, fair coz., so I succumb. After weathering *Black Jack*, the buoy off Calshot Castle, we landed at Southampton ; and after getting my traps passed through the Custom-house, I proceeded to Town. Having reported myself at head quarters, I asked for leave to go into Devonshire for a short time to recruit my health, which was kindly granted. So far so good. Now for a strange character that I ran up against on my way to the railway station. Mind, you asked for it."

"Granted," replied the young lady.

"It was light-hearted Jack Trussletree, of the 'Paddle-wheel Steam Navigation Company,'—a strange fish, but who has never been mentioned to you before. After an exchange of mutual civilities, we made sail, steered a course for, and ultimately brought up in a coffee-house, not far from the Guildhall, with an intention of splicing the main brace; but we had not been there long before a gentleman, with a grocer-shaped curly wig, made his *entrée*, whereupon Jack fixed his barnacles at the right focus, and took a look at the stranger, then whispered to me,—'Do you know who that cove is with such a queer rig?'

"'No!' I answered, a little puzzled.

"'He's a land shark; and most probably, by the size of his overbusting paunch, has been a-gobbling up some of the smaller fish already to-day.'

"The words were no sooner out of Jack's mouth, before the very individual fixed his eyes upon us; and if ever there was a being in the world who had those extra horse-power microscopes Sam Weller talks about, he had, and they were still on us.

"He came a little nearer, and addressed Jack in these words:—'I beg pardon, but may I ask where you procured that overcoat of yours?' [It was a 'Greggo.']

"I directly thought my friend was suspected of thieving, and began to picture him in my own vivid imagination being led away captive between two 'peelers.' But Jack returned his gaze steadily, struck his left arm out, as it were, as if to show the texture,—and it looked very bare, indeed, for it had been *died* twice at Southampton,—then coolly said, 'Well, to tell you the truth, I got it from the battle-field at ah—Inkermann. A Russian general was doubled up in it; and seeing, although it was bitterly cold, that it did him no good, I passed the

compliment, as it were, of asking for it, and then ah—borrowed it. That's where I procured it, sir.'

" 'Ah, so I thought,' exclaimed the stranger, rubbing his hands in high glee at his own acuteness in arriving at such a correct conclusion. 'What would you spare it for?' asked he, in a smooth oily tone of voice.

" 'Really, sir, I'm afraid there's some little mistake, ah,' exclaimed Jack, looking as fierce as a bear with a sore head over the top of his 'specs. 'I hope you don't take me to be a vendor of second-hand clothes? Dame Fortune has played some strange pranks with me, but I'm not quite at so low an ebb as that yet, although now I'm down to a Dietrichsen and Hannay's Almanack. No, no! sir,' continued he, rising and putting his hand in his pocket for his card case, and then presenting one. 'My name is Trussletree, sir; Captain Trussletree.'

"The individual so addressed essayed to speak, but Jack wouldn't have it at any price; for he said, 'Allow me, sir, for one moment. I can show you unexceptional references as regards my position in life. Do you know, sir, it was I that navigated a ship from Melbourne to Sydney, MANNED by NEEDLEWOMEN? A real fact, sir. It was I that brought home a large seal from the Cape, where it drifted on a piece of ice from the Crozetts islands, and sold it to an individual in London, who had it publicly exhibited as the GREAT SEA LION, thereby getting in a right line to make his fortune, when the poor unfortunate beast overgorged himself and died, which damped the prospects of his owner, and saved thousands of the mob from being gulled simultaneously. This is a real fact, sir, too. And after doing all this, to be taken for a rag and bone merchant! Well, I'm hanged!' Having spoken till he was almost black in the face, he sat down, with a hand on each knee.

" 'My dear sir,' expostulated Curly Wig, placing his

hand on the much-coveted garment in a most friendly manner, 'you perfectly misunderstand me ; for it is not the *intrinsic value* of the almost thread-bare greggo that I look at, but in my eyes it has a much greater one,—the *curio of the article*, having been taken off the blood-stained plains of Inkermann.'

" 'Ah ! that alters the case materially,' said Jack, seeming to cool down a little.

" 'Listen to me a moment,' continued the other, looking hurriedly at his watch. 'Let us come to the point at once. We lawyers don't get that credit generally, but my time is limited. If you don't mind taking that 'greggo' off your back, I'll write you out a cheque on my bankers for ten pounds. So, say the word.'

" 'We-l-l,' answered Jack doggedly, drawing the monosyllable out to its fullest length, with a becoming appearance of regret depicted on his expressive countenance, 'If you'll promise me, on the word of a gentleman, you won't think I'm one of those despicable rag vendors who buys up all the dirty ribbons, gets them *fresh dyed*, and imports them to Australia for new, why I don't m-i-n-d.'

"In five minutes afterwards, the cheque was duly made out, the 'greggo' taken off, and the exchange followed.

"After a 'good day,' Curly Wig closed the door on himself, and was gone : for myself, I stood like one transfixed with amazement during the foregoing dialogue ; but when sufficiently recovered, I said,—I say, Jack, you're not going to cash that money-order, are you ?

" 'Well, my impression at present is that I shall ; and 'tisn't at all likely my mind will be changed on that score. If it does, depend on it some extraordinary

phenomena of nature will take place. There'll be an earthquake, or a long-tailed comet making its appearance shortly.'

"Why 'twas only ten minutes ago you told me yourself the 'greggo' was bought in Gib. *for a sovereign*, and that *you had worn* it during the whole campaign in the Black Sea, trooping.

" 'True, oh king,' replied Jack, nothing abashed; 'the reason I *did him* was, because he happened to be a *land shark*; and you're a witness that this here salt-water fish, who has doubled the Cape oftener than he has been to Gravesend, *played* him beautifully, and nabbed the crittur at last. It is no sin, Harry, you may depend on it; as for my conscience, why, d'ye see, I'll soon square *that* by the lifts and braces. The *tin* will be made a present of, to a FUND FOR RELIEVING THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS OF THOSE POOR SAILORS BELONGING TO THE MERCANTILE MARINE, who, through hard work and constant exposure, died in the Black Sea, whilst employed in the Transport Service; for there is no Patriotic Fund for them to bail out of.'

" 'Jack,' I exclaimed, 'you are a brick, and I am PROUD of your friendship.' We bade each other hurriedly good-bye, for I had to save t' e train.

"The next morning I arrived at Plymouth, and thence, without waiting an hour, proceeded up this lovely river in a steamer; and some day or other—for I forget now, it has passed so quickly away—I thrust myself unasked, unsolicited, on Ned's hospitality, and here I have been ever since. But I intend leaving as soon as possible; for I know, if I remain here, you will both spoil me by your kindness."

"Not a bit of it," said Ned, giving one of his hearty laughs. "I know you are pulling my leg," continued

he, "but I'll tell you candidly what it is, Harry—we shall *both miss you*; shan't we, Jane?" turning to his sister, in an enquiring tone.

But she made no answer. The little robin redbreast thinks her mind was occupied at the time with her knitting; for her little, delicate, well shaped, taper fingers were moving very fast; and all for those brave soldiers, who were so courageously fighting their country's battles. Perhaps one of those, who deigns to read these pages, wore those very same stockings, who knows?

CHAPTER XVIII.

PREVIOUS to Harry Acquilier's leaving Cleveland, a few calls had to be made to those friends who were neighbours to the brother and sister, Ned and Jenny Middleton, in consequence of his being about to take his departure; and his piece of pasteboard, signifying that it was a case of O.P.H., was duly left at the doors of all who were not at home. But these were confined to one or two only: the others, whom he had been more fortunate with, have figured in these pages before; for they formed a part of that memorable Dartmoor pic-nic.

The Hewtons, for instance—those light-hearted merry crickets, the "echoing sisters"—were quite rejoiced at the visit, which they each expressed in their own peculiar way; but when informed of his purposed departure, all in regular rotation gave Jenny, who had accompanied him, a very expressive look, which was evidently intended to mean a great deal or nothing at all, exactly as it took,

and exclaimed, with much surprise depicted on their good-natured faces, "What! going to leave us so soon, Mr. Acquilier? Yours is a short stay indeed: no time at all."

So they chatted on; nor were the events of the pic-nic forgotten, particularly the dangerous position they were in coming down through Liphill Woods; and Amelia still recollected about the American gentleman coolly taking off his neckerchief and tying it round her waist, for the purpose, as he said afterwards, of saving her life at the risk of his own. The gentleman on the other side of the water was also on the tapis. Jokes passed in quick succession from one to the other, till at last the word good-bye was spoken.

Next came the Collinses, the two fat red-faced young ladies, and their brother. Didn't they recollect every little occurrence?—what a difficulty they had of getting out of the conveyance! The very thought of it was dreadful; their faces were in a perfect "friz" in consequence. And the sentimental one could recollect every word of Mr. Acquilier's *ticking* song. Then the Newparks were visited. That worthy emblem of a Devonshire gentleman farmer, the late president of the pic-nic, was, with his partner the ex-vice, looking as blooming as ever. Our old friend Jonathan was still a visitor at his hospitable house, between whom and Newpark, junior, there was a most decided change, and for the better.

On Harry Acquilier questioning Young America on the subject, he received the following candid reply:—

"Wal, we didn't hit it at first by no means—something like you and I at Marseilles; but I calkilate we should very soon mend. But to the p'int: I was Young America, and, d'ye see, p'r'aps a bit too national and headstrong—you can't blame a man for that; and I

suppose the young Britisher hurted my feelings, which I can tell you are very sensitive at all times, about my spitting, and a few other unpleasant allusions to my country. The first I could have forgiven, 'cause I know we Americans are a chewing people. For myself, I have been told I was born chewing; and the first thing I did, when I opened my peepers and found myself in the New World, was to spit, which unfortunately struck the nurse right in the eye; and, poor thing, she has been blind of that one ever since—this is a real fact.

“So in order to retaliate, I said all the ill-natured and cross things I could think of against the mother country, but not a word in her favour. I forgot for the moment, that this spot of ground, small though it be, is the only land throughout Europe that can boast of true liberty; where the exile, the refugee—no matter of what nation, French or Neapolitan—can place his foot on, and say, ‘Thank God, I’m safe now from tyranny.’ I forgot that we, across the Atlantic, are indebted to this country for our institutions, the bulwark of the Great Republic; for we copied them. I did not recollect that, whilst the Britishers laughed good-humouredly at our little follies, we grew angry, and sometimes pugnacious, at theirs. I also forgot that England was ever in the foremost ranks of civilization, the first nation to use all her endeavours to put down that abomination to humanity, the African slave trade, and oftentimes at the risk of quarrelling with her neighbours; but she takes her stand, and right is might.

“In a word,” continued Young America, getting a little excited with his encomiums on the parental country, “we, at our distance, can view you all at a glance, through an unprejudiced and unbiassed telescope; for we have no interest in particular about what you call the

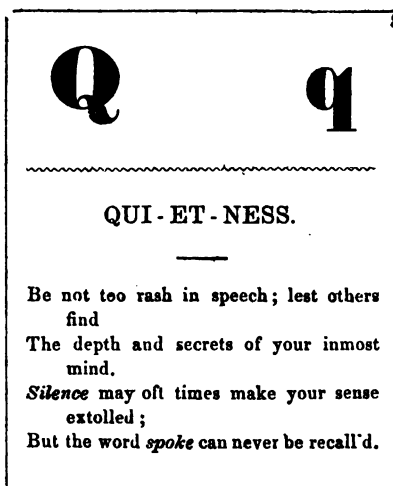
balance of power ; and in the broad landscape laid out to our view, one little corner, if I may so term it, stands out in bold relief from all the rest, with its happy people and richly cultivated vales in strange contrast : that little corner is England.

“ And, again, those rulers who govern the different nations forming that bright landscape, have all their characters laid open to us, both public and private, for we hear all. People, when they are so far distant, are not afraid to open their lips ; and any room for calumny, or the faintest breath of scandal, would be wafted across to us with the quickness of electricity. But without entering into the merits of the many, I guess it will suit my purpose if I mention one, and that is Queen Victoria. Her name stands forth pre-eminently, as an unspotted emblem of purity itself ; and if we Americans want to point to an example, we say to our wives and daughters—I speak figuratively—‘ Look, and you will find it in the home of Britain’s Queen.’

“ To prove that what I say *is not too close up against the royal backstays*, let her only make up her mind to pay America a visit ; and directly she puts her dear little foot on the earth of the New World, if she doesn’t receive such a welcome by the whole population of the States, as would take the shine out of all creation. Then, and only then, I’ll say you may disbelieve me. But, mum—I’m going to haul my bowline, and keep full and bye..

“ It was very natural, your feeling surprised at our friendliness after what occurred ; but we both soon found out that, in pleasing our tongue, we oftentimes spited our mouth or nose, and that other people reaped the advantages ; so we ’bout ship, and stood on the tack of friendship, and find it best for all concerned. Nor ought I to neglect informing you, that p'r'aps there is more

credit due to my young friend—who, between you and I, is up to as many moves as there are on a draught board (which, they say, are upwards of 30,000)—than to myself; for the morning after I made myself hoarse with talking, he quietly placed one of his alphabetical cards in my hand. Here it is; look at it:—



“ So, after swallowing that pill, I went and turned the matter over in my mind, as it were, then made it all square; and although, when I first arrived in this country, I resembled your Garrick, in not having a single friend beyond the pale of my relations, I am happy to say now I have many; and what is more, hope to stick to them.”

Jonathan, it was true, had made himself quite at home with old Newpark, who appeared quite rejoiced at his

company ; for our Yankee friend kept them all alive with his queer stories and comic songs. The warm-hearted old gentleman, after shaking hands about twenty times over and over again with Harry Acquilier, expressed a hope that he would be present at *his* pic-nic next summer ; and the cheerful and motherly ex-vice made him promise, if ever he travelled that road again, to embrace the opportunity, and give those people who had called her husband such bad names a sound drubbing ; which of course was acceded to, amidst loud laughter.

One more call to the Nortons, and that would finish. On entering their pretty little garden, Miss Fanny was caught pruning some geraniums ; and with her disshevelled black raven-looking curls, hanging down *a la négligée* behind her tawny mushroom hat, looked most decidedly bewitchingly handsome, and by far the prettiest flower there.

"How do you do, cousin Harry ? [she always called him by that name.] What a stranger you are !"

"Yes, Fanny—that is to say, cousin Fanny—I keep out of danger," was the quick and playful answer ; "for I am sure those long flowing ringlets will create great havoc in some poor fellow's heart yet."

"Oh, those heartless sailors !" exclaimed Fanny. "But there's no one thinks of taking any notice of what *they* say."

"It's only a sailor, cousin Fanny."

"What do you mean by that ?" quickly asked the pretty brunette, as she observed a serious look cross the countenance of her visitor, accompanied with a sigh.

"I only mean this," answered Harry Acquilier, speaking a little seriously, with his eyes cast down on one of Fanny's little flower pots, which he was poking unmercifully with his "Penang lawyer." "We are often ac-

cused of having no feeling, no charity, nor any other of those good qualities that ordinary men are possessed of; whilst our little faults are never out of sight. For only go into the street of any seaport town, and ask what that mob means? the answer will be, 'Oh, it's only a drunken sailor.' Perhaps that very individual, who gave you that answer, himself gets *screwed* every night, or let me say every Saturday night; but is so habituated to that vice—for he gets used to it—that he can manage to find his way home quietly, although perhaps the streets are a little narrow in some places. On the other hand, if that poor sailor belongs to the naval service, he in most likelihood has been on the sickly coast of Africa for three years, and during the whole of that time has never been once the worse for liquor; or if it is one belonging to the Merchant service, he might have been wishing some of his messmates good-bye—those who had eat out of the same mess-kid, drank out of the same pannikin, were aloft side by side together in the fearful gale, or had the same *trick* at the wheel during a long voyage—all the time keeping steady and sober, doing his duty manfully, and for which his certificate, duly signed by the commander, testifies: he is now on shore, and the parting glass takes him off his legs.

"Watch the poor crippled beggar asking alms of him. Jack takes a look round to see that no one is looking, then quietly drops a piece of silver into the grateful but spare withered hand of the recipient.

"One word more, cousin Fanny," continued the speaker, observing the tear-drops of sympathy for poor Jack glistening like diamonds of the first water under her beautiful eyelashes. "Jack does his good deeds by stealth, and you'll never find his name stuck up and exposed to view in any flaming subscription list."

Charity is his guiding star, no one asks of him in vain ; 'for who knows,' so will he say to himself, 'how soon I may be in want myself?'

"In conclusion, the sailor's last resting-place may, in all probability, be under that dark blue sea over which he has so often traversed in safety, for the slightest mishap—one false step—precipitates him from aloft into the watery billows beneath ; and the picture deduced an hour afterwards, when the full moon shall have lightened up by its silvery rays the melancholy scene, casting a gloomy and mournful brightness around the sad spectacle, will be thus : a life buoy floating lazily on the surface, which had been hurriedly thrown overboard by those on board that dark looming vessel in the far distance, who had used every endeavour, but unfortunately to no purpose, to save the form which the ocean has now closed over, as if nothing at all had occurred. A hat floats near, and is seen lifting buoyantly on the crest of a wave, whilst the albatross, ignorant of its nature, comes hovering around it, thinking to satisfy its craving appetite. Onward the gallant ship speeds on her homeward voyage, bearing the sad tidings perhaps to father, mother, sister, wife—however, to some one who will mourn his loss, and whose eyes will glisten with a tear to the memory of him whose bones are whitening beneath the dark blue sea."

Here the soft-hearted girl shed real tears.

"But listen another minute only, cousin Fanny. Cast your eyes up aloft, and you will perceive with joy a sweet little cherub, holding a wreath of laurel, and chaunting a requiem over the watery grave of poor Jack.

"Now, my pretty coz., I've finished, what do you think of sailors, eh?"

"I will tell you, in a very few words, what my opinion

of them is," answered Fanny, hesitatingly, wiping her eyes meantime. "They remind me of what Queen Elizabeth said of the Cornish gentlemen; that is to say, the little I have seen of them."

"What is that, may I ask?"

"That they were all born courtiers, with a becoming confidence."

Miss Fanny said this with all becoming modesty; but it was lisped out so prettily, that Harry Acquilier immediately took the hint, and impressed a nice little kiss on her forehead, telling her, at the same time, she was one of the best and kindest-hearted cousins that he was possessed of.

"But, cousin Fanny, I'm come to wish you good-bye," exclaimed he suddenly, as if recollecting himself.

"Good what?"

"Good-bye; for, now I'm quite recovered, I must be off."

"Well, you sailors are a restless set of beings, say what you like."

"Now, be careful; I gave you a bit of a lecture just now: I thought that would make you a little cautious, but I see you've forgotten all about it already. But where and how is cousin Maggy?"

"Here she is," answered Miss Fanny, as she threw open the front door, "and will answer for herself."

Poor Maggy was reclining on a sofa, or couch; but her appearance reminded him of the following Latin proverb:—

"*Illā dolet vere, quæ sine teste dolet;*"

for although she said, 'I am quite well, I thank you,' there was still that flush on the cheek, accompanied with the low hollow cough; and after a few enquiries of how

she had left her brother Richard at the beach when he was leaving for Australia, Harry Acquilier bade good-bye, and departed.

One more night was passed at Cleveland, and notwithstanding the conversation ran mostly about the comical occurrences that took place at the Dartmoor pic-nic, it occasionally flagged ; for the thoughts of those present were not in it, and several times during the evening some very awkward pauses ensued. During those short intervals, the two puffed away at their meerschaums, looking thoughtfully at the little curls of smoke as they gradually increased in size during their ascension, and then slowly evaporating into air, reminding them of that old song—

“ Tobacco is an Indian weed,
That grows at morn and is cut down at eve :
It is gone with a touch,
And man's life is such.
Pray, think on this when you smoke tobacco.”

Early the next morning, Harry Acquilier was aroused by Ned, whom he found standing at his bed-side, laughing merrily, coolly informing him that it was impossible his going to Plymouth that day, as the little steamer was in sight, and paddling away round the bend of the river. The words were no sooner out of his mouth than the sleeper was out and nearly dressed, frightening his companion almost out of his wits at the sight of his activity. A quick glance around the homely looking apartments where he had spent such a happy time ; the settle by the hearthen fire ; the old-fashioned clock ; nor was the ancient weather glass forgotten : each and all, even at that hurried moment, were encompassed in his quick survey, bringing a host of welcome recollections to his

then confused state of mind. A hearty shake of the hand from Ned, with a—ah—*cousinly* kiss to Jenny, and he was off; had closed the garden gate; and in another second was out of sight.

Let us follow him. After a sharp run, he just caught the steamer, leaped on board, and in another minute was gliding down over the smooth flowing surface of the Tamar. The noise occasioned by the "stamps" of the silver lead mine, which engine ground the rich ore, gradually died away, as the distance between them increased; and the long smelting chimney passed, then came Cleveland, the bower, flagstaff; with the brother and sister, Ned and Jenny Middleton, waving their handkerchiefs. "Good-bye, good-bye," did he unconsciously utter to himself, as he returned their kind salutation. Let us leave him to his own thoughts, as he proceeds down the "green water" of the Spanish ballad, viewing, as he glides along, the picturesque country around, clothed in its richest verdure, and listening to the good-natured witticisms of the laughing-eyed cheerful market maidens, who were proceeding to Plymouth with their butter and clotted cream, looking the very picture of health and happiness.

The various little hamlets are passed, with the ancient town of Saltash—where the celebrated Albert Bridge is erected that is to connect Cornwall with England, so people say—down through the famous Hamoaze, and Devonport is reached. Tendering his fare to the Captain, Harry Acquilier jumped on shore at that well known landing place, North Corner; and what with the various cries from those celebrated Saltash women, of—"All off, all off, all off," "Fresh mack-arel," and "Come, buy my pickle cocks"—was glad enough to get away, proceeding at a quick pace towards Plymouth, the residence of his

parents, passing on his road that iniquitous halfpenny bridge, and then through Union Street, or short-cut up to the Market, when he was suddenly arrested from his progress by the sight of a young woman, who was evidently, by her *embonpoint* appearance, *enceinte*. She was looking very earnestly at a *calf's liver*, hung up at a butcher's stall, as if longing for it, but had not the wherewithal to procure the same.

He thought to himself, "I'm sure I've seen that face before, somewhere; the features are certainly very familiar to me." He stood there, as if attracted by some unknown agency, rooted to the spot, watching her every movement.

After turning it over and over for a second or two, she made a sudden movement towards the butcher's wife, who was at the time talking to some other woman, and asked, in a faltering voice, "What was the price?"

"Vour-pence."

"Ah, I feared so," said the poor woman, counting out the contents of her money bag, and finding only three pence, gave the envied delicacy another look, then turned to go away, with disappointment depicted on her thin peaky countenance.

The two women whispered something to themselves, the only words overheard being, "Eez, eez, I war the zame wi' my little Sammy." The butcher's wife then called out, at the top of her voice, "Come back, chield; you shall have it, wi' all *me* 'art." Took it down and gave it to her, receiving the three pence in exchange.

"Well, I was a little way *cagged* about it," said the grateful woman; "and, mayhap, some time or other, you may get doubly paid for it."

"No sooner said than done, Sarah, my lass," cried Harry Acquillier, handing out the money; and giving

back the maid-of-all-work (for it was she) her few last pence.

"Well I never, if it isn't Master 'Arry, that I was a-thinking I should never see any more, and looking spiffing too," exclaimed Sarah, dropping a curtsy, and the calf's liver simultaneously, in her surprise.

"Yes, it's me, Sarah; at least what remains of me; but I say, have you altered your condition, name, or what?" taking a scrutinising survey of her portly *tout ensemble*.

"There you be agin, a-ferreting of me as usual," answered the woman, stooping down to take up the fallen meat, and hiding her blushes at the same time. Then resuming, she said, "I'm married, sir."

"So I should imagine," was the abrupt rejoinder.

"And I've got a 'usband."

"Well done."

"And although I don't like bragging, I will say this, he's not a cadger, or a stuck-up looney; neither is he a button short, for he's all there, sir."

"Go a-head, Sarah."

"He's got a sitiation ashore."

"Bravo."

"A staff app'intment, Master 'Arry." As the ex-maid-of-all-work uttered this last piece of astounding information, she proudly drew herself up, as much as to say, "What do you think of that, now?"

"A what?" screamed her interrogator, completely non-plussed.

"Wears a nuniform, and walks the streets like the gentle folks."

"Ah, I see, I see; a flunk—"

"Master 'Arry, doan't-ee 'orrify me by thinking that ways o' me," interrupted Sarah, looking annoyed. "Geeze agin."

"A militia man?"

"No, you be very cold now."

"The parish beadle?"

"No; you be gitting warmer, though."

"Public park keeper?"

"Geeze agin."

"Town crier?"

"You be gitting 'ot now."

"Railway porter?"

"'Otter and 'otter; geeze agin."

"A what-d'ye-call him who carries the mayor's mace?"

"Warmish only."

"A dock walloper?"

"Now it's a singeing of he-e; 'otter, 'otter, and 'otter."

"I'll give it up," exclaimed Acquilier, in a pet at not having made a correct guess.

"Well, I did think you knew a thing or two—up to a pinch of snuff, as they say; 'ticularly after your affair with that hold maid, who sent you a hinvite to come and see her, as she wur in love with he-e. That was deep sure enough for he-e, to 'smooth the lap dog,' 'chirrup to the canary bird,' 'call the cat a darling,' and 'kiss the parrot,' in order to git into her good books for the fun of the thing."

"I sha'n't ask again, Sarah," said Acquilier, seeming to be a little put out by hearing the above.

"Well, then, he's what the little boys calls a 'bobby,' sir."

"I'm just as wise as ever now."

"B'longs to the blue-coated and plated-buttoned gentry, sir."

"You *are* taking a nice rise out of me, Sarah, and no mistake."

"Lor' bless he-e, Master 'Arry, how hīnnocent you be," cried the woman, almost going into hysterics with laughter. "He's a p'leeceman; mind, he's not a common p'leece," continued the wench, after she had recovered her risible faculties sufficiently to speak; and noticing the look of disappointment that crossed the countenance of the one she was addressing; "for Sam's paid by the corporation, and not by the government."

"I don't see the difference, Sarah; it is a case of six of one and half a dozen of the other."

"Sam thinks different, sir; and all that I can get out of him, when I argufies the p'int, is, EVERY ONE HIS PRIDE."

"Ah, Sam's his Christian name, is it? Pray, what may be his surname?"

"You've 'eard it afore, Master 'Arry; it's the one I used to give the flowers to; the one as I told you about that bitter cold morning you left in the 'bus,—Sam Cowley."

"But I thought he was a sailor, eh?"

"So he was, sir; but, d'ye see, I 'eard people say they had wives in every port, and I didn't like that; so made 'em try and get a staff app'intment, in which he at last succeeded in doing."

"How is my father and mother—are they quite well? do tell us the news, do, Missus Cowley."

"Call me Sarah, if you please, Master 'Arry: I like it better from you; it sounds homely; jist the same as you used to be. Missus and Mayster be quite well when I see'd them last," continued the wench. "They've been both very kind to me; I left shortly after you, in consequence of a *rig* I had with that bad-tempered thing that used to be constantly biting her nails—the one you used to call 'Vinegar sweat.' She commenced kicking up her

tantrums shortly after you had gone; and Sam being someways rakishly inclined, I took pity on 'en, and got married. It was about that time I found the little money you was kind enough to give me, came in 'andy; for, you know, one Saturday night I was walking down the road, as it were, into the town, when I seed a mob of squalid 'alf-clothed ragged miserable-looking crayturs, all of a 'eap outside the door of a 'pop shop,' waiting to be admitted: for the inmates were Jews, and their sabbath was just expiring. I stood there a-watchen' 'em for some few minutes, noticing the holler-eyed women in particular; they looked sich gin guzzlers, that my 'art growed sick at the sight. Just as I was about to go away in disgust and 'orror, the door was thrown open. and then sich a scramble took place! So out of curiosity' sake like, I went over and peeped in at the winder; when, lo and behold, I spied my Sam go up as cool as a cowcumber to the counter, jist like a rigular skienced 'un, take out his duplicate, and paid down some money. In return, he receives his best go-to-chapel clothes, which was up the spout. You can't tell how I felt, I was in sich a tare; how I grabbed 'old of him; I don't know but I made him promise me, there and then, that he would never do sich a 'orrid thing agin, at the same time shoving all my little savings slily into his coat pocket. What do you think, sir? The very next day, he had the imper'ence to tell me, with a face on him as long as a mile post, says he, 'Saireh, I've broked my wurd, I've been on the pawning dodge agin; but it's the last now, I reckon, and no mistake.'

"'What 'ave you got rid of now?' asked I.

"'Myself,' said he, with a wicked-looking grin; 'and as I've thrown away the duplicate, it's out of my power redeeming the pledge agin.'

"So with that he takes out my little bag of money; gives it to me, bidding me to be careful of the same, as it is his val-ee. Three weeks after, I was married, sir; and that's all I've got to tell he-e about myself. There, dearie me, the town clock is just going one, and I've to cuuke Sam's dinner. Excuse me now, Master 'Arry; but do he-e come down to-morrow, I've got sich lots to tell he-e." She then tripped laughingly away, looking back after she had gone a dozen paces, shaking her head, exclaiming, "You be a sly 'un, Master 'Arry, and no mistake."

Harry Acquilier proceeded on towards his home.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE remaining part of his journey was pursued in deep thought, for Sarah's last words of "You be a sly one, Master 'Arry, and no mistake," seemed to portend much, although only spoken in a joking manner; and as soon as the remark had properly fallen full weight on his mind, he turned sharp round in the hope of catching a glimpse of the one who had uttered it, with the intention of going back and asking what she meant. But, no; Sarah was out of sight, and, foolishly enough, he had forgotten her address, consequently there was no help for it but to wait for the morrow. Was it possible that the maid-of-all-work could have found out anything about Annie Rennoldson? or, still worse, had his father and mother pierced the secret?—were questions that arose, one after another, in his agitated mind; but he had almost ar-

rived, for there stood the letter-post, at the corner of the street, that he had leant against the morning he was leaving, waiting for the 'bus. Then poor Sarah's little attentions and kindness recurred to his memory, in bringing him some sandwiches.

At last his parents' house was entered. Glad enough were they both at seeing him; for the prodigal son could not have received a heartier welcome than he did. We will pass over the enjoyment and happiness of that evening, and will simply say, there was not the slightest allusion made about such a person as Annie Rennoldson, much to the son's delight and consequent relief of mind.

The next day, having procured Sarah's (or Mrs. Cowly, as she should henceforth be called) address from one of his father's servants, he proceeded in search of her habitation, which happened to be situated in that aristocratic and popular thoroughfare, "Sausage Lane," and which, after many enquiries, was duly found.

Mrs. Cowly's dwelling, although not one of the most commodious, was neat and clean,—a true sign that the inmates of that unpretending domicile agreed, and were happy in each other's companionship. She had put on her best cap for the occasion, knowing full well the bait she threw out would bring him there. After the usual salutations had been gone through, Sarah,—perceiving her visitor casting his eyes around, sailor-like, noticing everything, which was just as she expected and wanted, for every article was in its place,—exclaimed, "Ah! Master 'Arry, I've had a 'ard job to scrape all this together. We've lived close enough: but that little bag o' savings I gave to Sam was the beginning of it."

"But you don't live on calves' liver always, surely?" enquired her visitor.

"Oh! no, no! For the first month or two we lived on *fish* weak-en days, and *pilchards* of a Sunday."

"Rather low diet, I should think, Sarah."

"I don't know, sir; it's like all other things,—one gets used to it in time: besides," continued she, looking proudly at her well-polished furniture, "we are not the only ones in Plymouth *who stint their bellies to clothe their backs*, which you would very soon find out, if you were to watch them coming out of church on a Sunday."

"I dare say not, Sarah," interrupted Harry Acquilier, impatient to find out whether she had heard anything about Annie Rennoldson, and then began sounding her on that point, proceeding slowly, with his watchful eyes fixed scrutinizingly on hers.

"You expected me to call on you to-day?"

"I was certain of it, sir."

"Why?"

"Because I was."

"That's a woman's reason, Sarah."

"Well, answer this question, Master 'Arry, and I'll tell he-e all:—Be-e you in love?"

"Ye-es," was the answer, but spoken tremulously.

"I'm glad to hear it," said the woman, clapping her hands together for joy. "And it shan't be my fault if you're not taken in and done for ere long, I'm burned if it is; but listen to what I'm about to say to he-e, Master 'Arry; it's a long story, but I'd better tell it to he-e all. One evening, not many weeks after you had left, Sam and I was out a-keeping company, as it were, when he says to me, 'Saireh, may I help that lass behind over that clumsy style?'

"Ee-z, said I, a little bit put out; and you may lay'd harm-in-harm with her if you like,—it's all the zame to me.

“ ‘Thanchee, Saireh, that is kind of hee.’

“With that he coolly goes up to her, and, with a saucy smirk on his face, says, ‘My purtey maiden, I wouldn’t even let my sister yur get over that place without helping her, and I’m sure I’d do it much willinger for your purtey face and ’ansome figurr.’

“ ‘Young men *be* sich flatterers now-a-days,’ says she, *excepting* his offer, and jumping clean right into his arms.

“Do you know, Master ’Arry, at that moment I was miserable. I could have tore her bonnet off her ’ead, which I think Sam knew, for he gave me a nudge to be quiet. Says he, ‘Let me introdoose you to my sister, Miss Cowly. Miss, what is yur name did you say?’

“ ‘Miss Curlyteeth,’ answered the brazen jade.

“Says Sam, ‘Which harm will you take, my dearie? holding out his left one, and giving me his right.

“ ‘Thanchee,’ says she, only too glad to catch ’old of Sam’s harm,—‘I don’t generally lay’d by young men, ’cause one of them treated my young missus so badly; but your sister being with hee alters the case.’

“Sam gave me another nudge, and said, ‘I reckon I ’eard something about that. A cruel thing. He ought to have been ashamed of hisself, which I dare say he is by this time.’

“ ‘That is strange,’ said the girl, with an inclination to let her tongue run nineteen to the dozen: ‘law, me.’

“ ‘Let me see,’ continued Sam, as if thinking, ‘he had either dark ’air or—’

“ ‘The very man,’ interrupted she.

“ ‘His name is,—’ continued Sam carefully,

“ ‘Acquilier,—Mr. Acquilier,’ answered she hurriedly.

“It was my turn now to give Sam a nudge; and didn’t I laugh to myself. Oh, oh! thinks I: now I

know what Master 'Arry used to stay out for. I always thought you were on the *ran-dan*, sir, before."

"Go on, Sarah."

"Sam then quietly said, 'Has *her* 'eard from him lately?'

" 'Not a syllable; and what's more, *her* doesn't know his whereabouts; and the poor thing is a breaking her 'eart about it, and I often says to her, Miss Annie, it's no use a thinking and fretting about it, for *what can't be cured must be endured*.' Here there was a bit of a silence, when her again went on.

" 'Do you know, the very morning he went away she stole out of the 'ouse unbeknown to any one, and was brought back in a cab, in a dreadful state. She wouldn't look at any wittals for a week nor more; and her father, who quarrelled with this Mr. Acquier, telling him he shouldn't darken his door again, would have given many a bright guinea to have been able to have recalled him back. But no, he couldn't, for he didn't know where he had gone. I thought the ole man would have gone mad, for he said all sorts of 'orrid things; how that his money had always been a cuss to him, and sich like, enough to frighten anybody."

"Ah," said Sam, "I see now: it's the old 'un's fault, not the young 'un's."

"Well, the case is this, by all I can find out by spelling [pumping]. When her was at the railway station, her axed him where he was going. He, I suppose, being a little *riled* at the treatment he received from her fayther, and seeing no prospects of their coming together, said he didn't know, or otherwise gave her an all-around-the-corner answer. This is what I complains of him; for he ought to ha'e stuck to her, like her did to he-e."

" 'You'll find me jest the lad for that, my purtey,' said

Sam, giving her a squeeze, which made my blood boil again for jealousy; and I couldn't stand it any longer; so I says, 'Look here, young 'oman, I'll jist inform ye, before it's too late, this here ragamuffin isn't no more my brother than you be; an' he's been a-calling hisself my sweet'art up to within this last 'alf hour. But I'll give 'en his choice now, for two is company three is none.' An' with that I flings 'en off.

"Her directly did the same, telling him, with a spurt of the nose, that 'the loss of one is the gain of two and choice of twenty more.' Poor Sam, he did look pitiful, sure enough; an' I took pity on 'en, and me and Miss Curlyteeth got to be great cronies."

"Excuse me for interrupting you, Sarah; but where is the young lady now, and how is she?"

"I'll soon put your mind at rest on that score, Master 'Arry. Her is still at 'ome, but not so well as her deserves. An' I do think, by all that I've 'eard, her is a nice kind 'earted creature; an' I know you loves one another, an' it 'uld be a sin to part he-e."

"I should like to see her again," murmured Harry Acquilier to himself. "But it wouldn't do to speak; no, it cannot, must not be done, that is certain."

"Do he-e know what you used to say to me, Master 'Arry, when I told he-e it wasn't proper and right to stop out so late of a night, and put the clock back, and for me to rectify it in the morning?"

"No, I can't say I do."

"Well, I'll tell he-e. You used to say, 'Sarah, *don't tell your grandmother how to suck eggs*;' so to your 'cannot, must not be,' I shall return the same answer—'don't tell your granny how to suck eggs;' for noffing is certain in this world. Not only shall your wish be gratified, but you must speak to her too."

"No, no, Sarah, it won't do yet."

"I'm the best judge about that, Master 'Arry. But, dearie me, here you've been in my 'ouse full an 'our, and never wetted your lips! What 'ill he ha'e?"

"I'll have a drop of co-mingle, if you've got it."

"Co— what, did you say, Master 'Arry? I never 'eard o' sich liquor before."

"Half-and-half—porter and beer mixed."

"Sailors never call things by their proper name, and that's what I often tells Sam about. For if he wants a cup, he says, 'hand me a tot;' a tin pot he calls a 'pannikin;' a joint-of-meat dish, 'the kid;' a fork, the 'pricker.' Even poor pussy, the cat, has been christened another name. But what ferrets me the worst is, when he is about to go out on duty, and is in want of his staff, he sings out, 'Hand me my *serving mallet*.' Did ye ever hear of sich a thing? But I'll jist run out over the way here, and get the co-mingle."

After she had gone, Harry Acquilier pulled out a small savings box, which he had bought for the occasion, and which had the peculiarity attached to it, that if any one slipped a coin in, it was impossible to extract it without breaking the same open. After putting half a sovereign in as a beginning, he placed it on the dresser, telling Mrs. Cowly, on her return with the pewter, that he had brought a little present for the coming stranger. Whereupon, woman like, Sarah must examine; and on finding something already inside, said, "There you be again, Master 'Arry; up to your old tricks; jist like you, too—giving in such a unpurtending manner, and always a-joking good-natur'dly, as it were."

The reader may possibly be tired with Sarah's unsophisticated and not over-polished remarks; but the late maid-of-all-work had a warm heart, with a memory that

did not forget past kindnesses. Great then was her delight at finding she had now the opportunity of repaying it in full. Little did she imagine, at the time, it would ever be in her power to recompense him for that one act of kindness he had shown in stretching forth his hand in the timely hour of need, and rescuing her. If we all followed Sarah's example, and remembered past kindnesses, treasuring them up carefully until fate gave us an opportunity of paying them back to the kind one who gave them, what a much better world would this be. And yet it is not the round globe, but the people on it, who make it at times so disagreeable.

To resume. Harry Acquilier left Sausage Lane in much better spirits than he had entered it, as Mrs. Cowly's information cheered him up greatly. He knew, for certain, Annie Rennoldson was in good health, whatever grief she might have suffered through him. That was a great consolation; for had anything happened to her in his absence up the Black Sea, he would never have forgiven himself, but stood self-accused to his last day. He also knew for certain the "shabby button" had not taken his place in her affections. On this point, he closely resembled the dog in the manger: if he couldn't get her himself, would have been sorry at seeing any one else more fortunate. This may be attributed to what that well known and most inestimable lady, Mrs. Gamp, calls "'uman natur';" but so it was. And from some stray inuendoes gathered from Sarah, he felt sure that his love and affection were still reciprocated by the one they had been talking about. So he tripped lightly along, canvassing in his own mind what was best to be done under the circumstances. Should he call once more on her father, and again eat the humble pie? or leave it all to chance? The sight of a dog going leisurely along the

narrow pavement, holding out its long bushy tail in a most tempting manner, decided in a moment the uncertainty of his mind ; for it was made up instantaneously in this way—he would try and hit with his “ Penang lawyer” the projecting and tantalising limb, and if he succeeded, would call on old Rennoldson at once. If it proved a failure, he would wait till the fates gave him some little hitch to go upon.

The experiment was tried, and the stick missed by about an inch ; for the poor unfortunate animal, not having been previously consulted in the matter, directly it heard the unwelcome and too well known sound of the whiz behind, had the ill manners to draw the same between its legs, and run up the street, yelping with fright.

As Harry Acquilier was watching the retreating footsteps of this bright specimen of the canine species, smiling to himself at his adopting such a ludicrous method, he heard a well known voice issue from a partially closed carriage, saying, in a dry sinister tone, “ I’m much obliged to you, Mr. Acquilier, for striking my dog. Did you take the dumb animal to be a Calcutta jackal, or what ? So much for your humanity : it is from these little actions—trifles, I grant you, in themselves—that we judge of a man.”

The vehicle passed quickly by, and the next minute was out of sight, before a word could be uttered in reply ; for the one spoken to stood transfixed, panic stricken, as if rooted to the spot. It was old Rennoldson that had inflicted the well deserved rebuke, for it had been witnessed by his own eyes.

“ Could ever anything have happened so untowardly, so unfortunate ; and at this particular time, too !” were the exclamations uttered, when his self-possession had

been regained, and all former cheerfulness was at once changed into a woe-begotten crest-fallen despondency, which lasted many weeks, during which time the days passed heavily and slowly away.

It is true, about this period the news from the Black Sea became more and more exciting, the daily papers being much more interesting than at present. Consequently, feeling but little pleasure in moving about much, he remained in-doors perusing them, much to the surprise and delight of his parents—his father in particular; for the old gentleman would often exclaim, when seeing his son leaning moodily in the elbow chair, "Come along, Harry, my boy, give us a stave," and off they would both go together. Then some little anecdote of the war—how he had seen a man with both whiskers shaved clean off, never to grow again, and done within a few seconds of each other, by two separate balls; including many others of the same description. Nor must Mrs. Cowly's little attention be forgotten; for she called often, and always "a-begging Master 'Arry to move out a little more, as it would make him more cheerful;" although what object she had in view, in thus coaxing him abroad, no one beside herself knew.

At last, after many unsuccessful trials, she got him to promise meeting her in one of the most fashionable streets, on a certain afternoon, as she wanted to tell him something very particular. This was all the information he could obtain without doing as she desired; so being rather inquisitive to know what it was, he assented rather reluctantly to her extraordinary proposal, as he thought at the time, and at the hour appointed was at his post; but there appeared no Sarah.

Now, it was rather a strange coincidence, that the very place appointed should have been the identical one he

had paced up and down, on that cold wet stormy night before he left, and which has been before recounted. As he thought of how he had been disappointed then, in not meeting the one he so anxiously expected, and how much he had suffered in mind on her account since, a cold shudder pervaded his whole frame. It was at this moment, having just taken his eyes off the same lamp,—that was throwing its woolly glimmering flicker along the wet pavement, on that never to be forgotten period—he espied two ladies close to him, going the contrary way. There was no mistake about it: they were the widow and her lovely *protégée*, Annie Rennoldson; the latter looking as pale as marble, and leaning as if for support on her haughty-looking companion.

No sooner were they seen than every vein in his strong manly frame thrilled with delight. But what was this? He was purposely avoided; and with simply a cold distant nod of recognition, they passed by. Now came the contrast: the feeling of delight was at once changed for the utmost misery; a thick film appeared to come over his eyes, his temples throbbed, and his heart sunk within him. So completely taken by surprise was he, that he had proceeded several steps before his courage or firmness would allow him to seek an interview.

“Nothing like the present moment, Master 'Arry: 'it the hi-ron whilst 'tis 'ot. There's the widdler a-tricked off to the nines, carrying a muff, and a-mizzled into that confectioner's shop,” cried a voice close at his elbow.

It was Sarah. Without as much as uttering a word in reply, Harry Acquilier gave a stride or two towards the spot where the maid-of-all-work beckoned, and in another minute or so reached it. On opening the door, he found Annie Rennoldson lying in the arms of her *confidante*, the widow. She had fainted.

Seeing the shop girl look at him enquiringly, as it were, he said, with well feigned coolness, "I observed the lady taken suddenly unwell in the street, and came in to see if I could be of any service or not." Then addressing the widow, he bade her give over charge, as he would support the patient, which that kind-hearted person did, after some little show of reluctance. He was then crowned with that success his perseverance deserved; for he had the inestimable pleasure of carrying up stairs in his own arms the one he loved so dearly. The bonnet strings and neck tie were soon untied, and just before he knew she was coming to, he sent the widow away for some vinegar to bathe her temples with.

No sooner had she closed the door than the fair patient opened her eyes gradually, looked wildly round the room, and said, in a soft silvery voice, "Where is he?" That question conveyed a world of meaning to the one who supported her; but as for his answer, we will leave it for our young beauty's imagination, as all that followed after shall be screened from public gaze. It is needless to say, all matters in dispute were amicably settled by the parties concerned, much to the widow's regret and great chagrin; "For," as she said afterwards, "had it been me, he would have been led a nice dance," which no one doubted for a moment. But after all her harsh sayings, she behaved very kindly to the loving pair, for her house was still the "meet" for both.

Time once more flew pleasantly away, thanks be to Sarah, who had most decidedly been the cause of the meeting, for she planned it all herself, and only felt too glad at the turn of affairs.

It must not be supposed his interest in the war had decreased in consequence—far from it. The different newspaper-editions, telegraphic messages, and extras,

were greedily devoured, and his old ship the C——o's movements closely watched. Sir Robert was still in command, and continued to exert himself to the utmost in doing his part, which could be seen in the oftentimes-mentioned name of his ship in the *Times*. She had acted a conspicuous part at the exchange of prisoners at Odessa ; also in the expedition to Kinburn. Was there anything doing either in fighting, slaving, or rejoicing, Sir Robert was ALWAYS READY, and ever foremost. An instance of the latter may be given on the occasion of the news brought about the Empress of the French being safely delivered of an Imperial prince ; for he decorated his ship off to the best advantage, dressing that Merchant Transport "diamond fashion" in honour of the occasion. Nor was he backward in the salute ; for having a few invalided soldiers on board, who were almost convalescent, he mustered them at the proper time on the "bridge," in charge of a serjeant, placed a ship's loaded musket in the hands of each, and at a signal given by himself, ordered them to fire ; when, instead of a sound resembling a loud and deafening clap of thunder, which would have reverberated along the shores of the Bosphorus, and made the strong frame of the C——o shake again, a single musket only went off, for the rest had missed fire ; but after a little coaxing, all did their duty.

The beautiful Eugenie would have been highly pleased—could not have been otherwise—at the praiseworthy perseverance under difficulties displayed by those gallant redcoats, in order to give as much *éclat* to the auspicious event as it deserved, had she only known it. So much for Sir Robert's rejoicing.

* * * * *

To return to Harry Acquilier and Annie Rennoldson. Weeks, aye months, flew by in quick succession, during which time the first named had regained his wonted cheerfulness, the latter her former good health. Our young beauty will say, "What an extraordinary coincidence!" and the prospects in general were looking promising; for the war had ended, so that now there would be a chance of getting the *Transport Medal*. But no: the army and navy had received theirs, which were well earned; whilst the Mercantile Marine were, to use the language of the turf, "nowhere."

But hold! what is the meaning of Harry Acquilier's loud ring at old Rennoldson's door? Has he caught up with that faint glimmer of hope which was straight a-head? For he puts on a bold face to it, and holds a newspaper in his left hand. Let us usher him in—why wait for the laughing-eyed servant maid? But hush! let them speak for themselves.

"Pardon my once more intruding on your privacy, sir," began Harry Acquilier; "but when last here, you laid down certain conditions, under which I could become your son-in-law.

"The first was, I must be in possession of a *Merchant Transport Medal*.

"The second was, that I should be at the top of my profession.

"With regard to the first named, this newspaper which I hold in my hand will satisfy you *that* is all right; and as for the second, I can prove to you by ocular demonstration, that, ah—"

"Let us finish with the first, before you say a word about the second," interrupted the old gentleman. "The paper, you said," continued he, taking the same, and holding it up before his eyes, "will satisfy me that is all right.

It is the *Times*, I see, of yesterday, February the 14th, 1856; and, what's this—'A banquet given to Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons by the Lord Mayor, at the Mansion House.'"

"Carry your eyes down that column, sir, if you please, to where the Admiral returns thanks. Ah, there's the place," said Harry Acquier, pointing to a particular spot.

"Hum," mumbled the old miser, commencing to read the extracts: 'THE CONDUCT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE MERCANTILE NAVY, DURING THE WAR, ALSO REFLECTED THE HIGHEST HONOUR ON THE COUNTRY.' Humph! 'Those beautiful transports proved to be under the command of men of the greatest ability and zeal; and he (Sir Edmund Lyons) quoted, as conspicuous examples of what service they rendered, the conveyance of an entire regiment of dragoons to the Crimea by the Himalaya, at one trip.'"

"Excuse me one moment," interrupted Harry Acquier. "On that particular occasion, she being one of the Mercantile Marine, was commanded, officered, and manned by men belonging to the Merchant Service."

"'And the transport of Omer Pasha's army from Bulgaria to Eupatoria, in the depth of winter. Having *unbounded confidence* in the Mercantile Navy, he accepted the responsibility of accomplishing that movement. Nor was he disappointed; for in the month of December, 1855, 57,000 men, 11,000 horses, and 170 guns were landed at Eupatoria, with the loss of *only one horse*. As a further proof of the spirit evinced by the Mercantile Navy, the gallant Admiral gave a humorous description of the appearance presented one morning by the Colombo arriving, her yards slung with turkeys, geese, and fowls,

to furnish Christmas dinners for the army. Admiral Lyons concluded, ' &c., &c.

"There's nothing about Transport Medals here," exclaimed old Rennoldson, in a disappointed tone, looking over his spectacles.

"Granted, sir," was the quick reply; "but is there a single doubt but what they will be issued, after such an acknowledgment of their services, in public, by the very man who was best able to judge? Only imagine what an injustice it would be.

"Let us for instance draw comparisons. The doctor's servant (a boy) of that very ship, the Himalaya, after she had been bought and received into Her Majesty's Service, has received a Crimean Medal, whilst the Merchant Captain who previously commanded her, and done that service for which the Admiral gives him credit, receives NONE. Look at the conduct of the *Medico* of that vessel, when belonging to the Mercantile Navy. Mind, I notice these two ships only as representing a class, and because the Admiral mentioned them; for others have equalled them in the patriotism and zeal shown to their country."

"Stick to the point," interrupted old Rennoldson; "what about the doctor?"

"On the eve of the battle of Balaklava, he asked and obtained permission to go on shore, taking his instruments with him; and when he made his appearance again, was more like a butcher just come from the slaughter-house than anything else, being covered with human blood."

"Where had he been?"

"He had *voluntarily* gone to assist in dressing the wounds and alleviating the sufferings of the maimed and dying of his brave fellow countrymen brought in from the field of battle. The tales of horror related afterwards

about that night shall not be repeated to you, sir ; suffice it to say, that man's heart was in the right place, for his strict attention to, and kindness on behalf of, suffering humanity, was never excelled. I ask you, sir, is there one single doubt left on your mind with regard to *his* receiving some badge of acknowledgment, or of that zealous man the Master, as he is designated, of the Colombo, who brought our poor starving soldiers fresh provisions in the time of need ? Most assuredly not, sir ; for there was no mismanagement in their part of the play."

"It's no use your talking to me on those subjects, Mr. Acquilier. I must, will, and shall see the medal before I give way an inch ; and besides, I have a bone to pick with you. Do you know, sir, I heard on good authority that you were engaged to an East Indian girl, commonly called a Chee-chee ; that, in fact, the wedding day was fixed, dresses made, cards printed, and invitations issued, when you bolted ? I ask you, is it possible that I can give my consent for my child to be linked with such a base deceiver ?"

"Pardon me," interrupted Harry Acquilier, "for one moment, and let me tell you there are always two sides to a *door*, and it's seldom they are both alike ; for look at this," continued he, swinging the one he had entered by to and fro, "you will perceive the surface most exposed to the *heat* a *shade* or *two* darker than the other ; so, in like manner, you will find there are two sides to a story ; and, let me observe, with all due deference to your superior judgment, that I am sure you have only as yet looked on the *dark side*. It is true I told the pretty Chee-chee girl, that her lips were as red as the kandurâ, her feet as delicate as the flower of the *lotus*, that she was as wise as Sulaimân, just as Nanshirwan,

and, altogether, as beautiful as Dulaikhâ. But alas! sir, she was not quite so faithful as *Laité*; for her answer in return showed but too clearly that she was mercenarily inclined, which thoroughly opened my eyes."

"What was it?" enquired the Old Miser, a little amused.

"Her answer amounted to three questions, sir. The first was, *Government situation got?—Buggy, hi?—Silver teapot have?* To the first I gave a negative, and said I was a P. and O., at which she exclaimed, 'Arrah, my-e;' to the second an affirmative, and to the third ditto. Now, sir, I ask you, is it possible that any young man could be so far depraved, or so far gone in his infatuation as to link himself to one of those unfeeling creatures who simply act a part, more particularly when he knows, should he be blessed with a numerous offspring after marriage, that his children will resemble a set of chess-men, some white whilst others were black."

"But why did you mix with such people?" asked old Rennoldson.

"Because their houses were the only places I could go to for amusement; and anything, after a voyage, was better than stopping on board your ship, alongside the dirty banks of the river Hoogley, listening to the dismal wailings of the numerous jackals, and being stung to death by the swarms of mosquitoes. Had I accepted the invitations of some of our kind passengers to dine with them, it would have been a case of out of the frying pan into the fire; for just picture to yourself seeing your humble servant dressed in black cloth, buttoned up to the chin, and with a white neck tie screwed on to fit, sitting beside one of those fat dowagers, who were rather partial to their beer, talking conversation, and recapitulating some of the principal passages of the Reverend

Mr. Treacle's last sermon. On the other hand, if you honoured the chee-chee with your presence, everything was done to make you happy and comfortable. Did you wish to dance, to sing, to play the piano, fortune-telling, horse racing, or any other game, you had only to whisper. There was even a Mr. Jones hired for the occasion—a kind of hind or master of the ceremonies, who would, if required, fill up the figure of a quadrille, chime in the chorus of an ill-sung song, repair all mishaps, and, if needs be, lend you his buggy to drive home when you left. But, hold; you cannot give your host or hostess credit for all this, as it is well known the grand object they have in view is to entrap you into marrying one of their powder-faced daughters, causing you in all probability to be miserable for life.

"No, no," continued Harry Acquilier, "I satisfied my conscience for treading on their carpet, by occasionally making them handsome presents as a set-off to the same; but when it came to the ring, why, 'Hands off, Pompey.' I confess I was obliged to play a bold game, neck or nothing, being entrapped, and so completely drawn into the meshes of a net purposely laid for me, made by their superior cunning and chicanery, that to disentangle myself was next to an impossibility, without taking up their weapons; hence, 'the appointed day,' &c. Now, sir, you have heard my version of the story; and in taking a slight glimpse at the *pale* side of the door, I hope you will come to the same conclusion as myself, that altogether it was a case of *quid pro quo*."

The old gentleman listened attentively to what his would-be son-in-law urged forward in defence of the alleged crime, gravely shaking his head at the end, saying in reply, "I am exceedingly sorry, Mr. Acquilier, that I cannot view it in the same *light* as you do; consequently,

it will be useless your saying anything more on the subject which, I presume, brought you here. I wish you a very good day."

"It is rather hard lines," rejoined Harry Acquilier, determined to ram home his last shot; "and I've suffered quite enough already for that which ought never to have been laid to my door. However, it's the old adage, give a dog a bad name, and you may just as well hang him at once, for he gets more kicks than coppers. Good day, sir."

As he proceeded out, he espied the pretty little laughing-eyed maid, holding the street door open, who whispered to him, or else 'twas fancy, "A faint 'art never won a fair lady, sir."

Being again in the open street, Harry Acquilier cast his eyes up at the various windows. Whether he was habituated so doing from constant practice whilst at sea, looking aloft at the taunt spars, or that he had an object in it, perhaps time will tell. It is sufficient if we notice the fact, allowing him meanwhile to proceed on his way undisturbed.

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT a windfall that ecclesiastical law of being married by special license, is to those who have cross-grained "parients" to contend with! Not but what that old-fashioned plan of banns would answer the same purpose in nine times out of ten; for what regular church-goers, as they lean comfortably back in the corners of their pews, listen to the matter-of-fact, mumbling, but sonorous

voice of the reverend *padre*, when he publishes them? Very few, indeed, and those, generally speaking, are either disinterested or unknown; so the different couples are, to use the favourite expression of Mr. Dennis, of Barnaby-Rudge celebrity, *worked off* in their own way, to the mutual satisfaction of the parties concerned; whilst the Misses Gossip, who are rather numerous in this happy country of ours, cast up the whites of their eyes, clasp their pretty white hands together, and exclaim, with a semi-comic dramatic pathetic tone of voice, "Who'd have thought it? Well, I never. Oh, the sly puss!"

But in the case of Harry Acquilier and Annie Rennoldson, they were still more taken by surprise; for the news spread like wildfire, that the old miser's daughter had fled, whither no one knew; thereby giving room for scandal's hundred tongues, which was only silenced by old Rennoldson finding out, through the sexton's son—a brat of a boy, about twelve years of age—who bargained for a groat to tell him news worth hearing, viz., that "his darter was a-married the day afore by speshal ly-shence; he 'eard his fayther say he guv her away, and made a purty good day's work on it."

Let us leave the old gentleman to digest the news as best he can, and turn to the happy couple, who were now sure enough turned into one; for what with the widow's kind and voluntary advice, her lover's subtle well-plied arguments, and Sarah's coaxing—for the last-mentioned kind-hearted creature had done her part in bringing the match to a successful termination, and simply out of pure gratitude; for as she would say to her husband, the *peeler*, "One good turn deserves another, an' it's little I thought at the time it would ever be in my power to do he-e a good turn; but they say a worm,

if you tread on 'en, will turn agin, he-e : so likewise will that same small insect remember a kindness shown towards it"—and perhaps the promptings of her dear little heart, Annie Rennoldson gave way. For what young girl could withstand such an array of argumentativeness ? None who cared two pins for their intended ; consequently the licence was purchased, and as the sexton's son correctly stated, they were duly married.

The morning after, a scaling ladder was placed against her window, from which she issued forth, and alighted safely on *terra firma*. The policeman of that beat—being no other than Sam Cowly, Sarah's husband—strange to say, was struck "all of a 'eap" with a kind of dizziness, never felt before that particular morning. A cab from the nearest stand brought them to the same station where they had last parted ; and as the young husband reminded his fair partner of the fact, a cold shudder seemed all at once to pervade her whole frame for the moment, clinging with all her strength to the one who had then so heartlessly deserted her. But the widow and Sarah were there waiting to see them off. The latter had brought her baby with her, "one of the 'oops," as she jokingly remarked, "that bound the staves of the eask together." She also held in her hand a bag of fourpenny pieces, and on presenting them to Master Harry, said, "It contained a 'alf-sover'in's worth, which her 'usband Sam would persist in her giving him, with the following advice, that instead of Master 'Arry giving those porters, flunkies, touters, and sich like, a shilling or half-a-crown, to 'and them a fourpenny bit instead ; and that he was to be sure to do it for his sake, as Sam didn't like tricks being played upon travellers."

The next piece of advice the late maid-of-all-work gave was to the young wife, with a sly look, which was, "to

be careful of her bonnet, and be sure not to *joust the pinners*." Here the young bride, both having taken their seats in the railway carriage, *began scratching her elbow*; at sight of which, the widow was so convulsed with laughter—why or wherefore, our young beauty is left to guess—that she had barely time to say good-bye, before the train was in motion, and in another minute or two out of sight; and as they are not alone—for the carriage is crammed full—we will follow them as far as their journey's end only.

Away they went, through hills and over dales, passing the various frightful viaducts with a speed truly astonishing, taking into consideration the many short curves they had to whirl by. Then the English Channel, thickly studded with ships of various nations, wending their way peacefully along to the destined ports, richly laden with the produce of their country, passed in quick review, like a moving panorama, and the surf thrown up the pebbly beach by the long ground swell that came rolling in from the vast Atlantic, rumbled joyously to their ears.

But what is this? St. Thomas's? Yes, they had over-run their mark, and instead of reaching Torquay, had arrived at Exeter. Well, *it is* excusable under such circumstances: back they would have to go again.

"Never mind, Annie," exclaimed the bridegroom, noticing her disappointed looks; "perhaps it's all for the best; 'for oftentimes,' as we say at sea, 'is the longest way round the shortest way home;' and if your papa gives chase, why perhaps it's the best way of missing him."

This turned out to be correct; for old Rennoldson had despatched a trusty messenger, with full powers and strong injunctions to be sure to bring the runaway back,

either dead or alive ; being determined to uphold his reputation of " not being done : " for he had always boasted that no one could get the upper hand of him, likening himself to the " Land o' Cakes," bonnie Scotland, a nation which had never been conquered ; and to the virgin town of Londonderry, which had not as yet yielded to a foe.

A good cue having been obtained as to their whereabouts by the tickets they had procured at the railway station, the old miser's plenipotentiary set out by express for that favourite spot of dilapidated old Indians, who have neither liver nor lungs, or perhaps too much of both—Torquay. But on making inquiries of the police authorities as to their arrival there, he found he had been put on the wrong scent ; consequently, determined to return at once *instantly*, for fresh orders from headquarters, and luckily did not get back—thanks to the South Devon Railway—till the very nick of time, a day behind the fair.

Tracking old Rennoldson to his newly made son-in-law's paternal home, where he found the two respective papas going at it, " hammer and tongs."

" What has your good-for-nothing son done with my daughter, sir ? " enquired the irritated old gentleman, much flushed with rage and excitement.

" What has your daughter done with my son ? " exclaimed his antagonist, in answer to the query. For directly it was asked, the truth flashed on his mind all at once, like a " flash of lightning through a gooseberry bush," that his son had really *been, and gone, and done it*.

Here the factotum, or plenipo', made his appearance, and with a very long face said the *birds* had migrated somewhere—he couldn't tell where, for not the slightest

trace could be find of them. Whereupon old Rennoldson expressed himself to the effect, that if they had made a *hard* bed for themselves, on it they might lie for what he cared, as no helping hand would be held out by him.

The factotum, seeing what a turn things were taking in general, and knowing from experience that a pacifying word or two, thrown in edgeways, would oftentimes render some little service, began reasoning with the pair, telling them it would not mend the matter their having so many angry words, as by that means they would only make themselves unnecessarily uncomfortable and miserable, whereas they ought, there and then, to shake hands, congratulate each other on their relationship, and drink a bottle or two of wine to the happiness of the newly wedded couple.

A short pause ensued, when the two "old fogies" simultaneously held out a hand, and shook each other till they were both red in the face, adjourned to the parlour, and passed, as they said afterwards, one of the most agreeable evenings of their lives.

The bride and bridegroom were, meanwhile, at Torquay, where they had arrived a short time after the factotum left, just missing each other by a few minutes.

We shall not say how pleasantly the honeymoon passed in that delightful watering place, or enumerate the number of M.D.'s residing there; but will satisfy our young beauty on one point, namely, as to whether either of them had taken the precaution of procuring and drinking some water from the celebrated Cornish well of St. Keyne, which, Carew tells us in rhyme, possesses—

"The quality that man or wife,
Whose chance or choice attains
First of this sacred stream to drink,
Thereby the mastery gains."

Neither, luckily, had ever heard of such a place, consequently could not reap any benefit from the same ; and even had they both had the valuable knowledge, and attempted to take advantage of it, the result would, in all probability, have been the same as that in the case of the pair alluded to in the last stanza of a ballad, written by Dr. Southey, which runs thus :—

“ I hastened as soon as the wedding was o’er,
And left my good wife in the porch ;
But, i’faith, she had been wiser than I,
For she took a bottle to church ! ”

Instead of following the above example, both put their heads together, and wrote meek penitent letters to their respective *parients*, not for a moment expressing regret for the important step they had taken, but everything besides ; promising, if they were only forgiven *this time*, it should never happen *again* ; which, when received by the two *dads*, was the cause of a hearty roar of laughter, and another evening was jovially kept in honour of the absentees, both getting most decidedly “ up a tree ” during the latter part of the evening, in which old Rennoldson began moralising in his cups, saying, with a slight hiccup and a little unnecessary gesticulation, that “ He saw no reason, because the Government acted the shabby in not giving the sailors of the naval Merchant Transport Service a medal, that he should follow their example ; and as for the other step in the way of promotion, why the Company whom his son-in-law served always gave merit its due, whilst a good character was indispensable, which accounted, in some measure, for the few casualties happening to their fleet, also their proverbial good luck in alchemy—turning everything they touch into *gold*.”

So the old miser argued to his companion ; but the next day answers, carefully worded, were sent in reply to

those received, which were considered, by the parties to whom they were addressed, very favourable indeed; being no less than a full forgiveness, with a word or two about being energetic and zealous in his profession, as also an invitation, after the honeymoon had passed away.

So, having placed Mr. and Mrs. Harry Acquilier in mid channel, and given them a fair wind, we will let them alone to chalk out their own course in the broad chart of life, at least for awhile; hoping that, in steering by the compass called common sense, they will give their undivided attention to "deviation" and "local attraction," for by so doing all breakers and sandbanks will be carefully avoided.

Having disposed of them for awhile, we will turn to those few who have played a part in these pages, as it is but manners, after all, to bid them good-bye. And in doing so, let us, in the first place, introduce our readers into a sick chamber. Pray, turn the handle of the door gently, and close the same softly after you; as the slightest breath of fresh air that's wafted into that close room, causes the patient most excruciating pain, for it accelerates that but too well known hacking cough, which has unfortunately gained the mastery over the frail weakly frame it afflicts. Approach stealthily, on tiptoe, being careful as to your dress rustling, and otherwise guarding against undue excitement, for it is an enemy to that lingering disease, *consumption*; when you will observe an emaciated death-like form before you, whose torch has almost burnt out, for no human aid can prolong that life which has been demanded by the great and glorious Being who gave it. Notice, even now, the slightly flushed colour on her thin but deeply sunken cheeks; also, her extraordinarily bright lustrous eyes,

fixed upwards. And, hush! the lips are moving, in all likelihood in prayer, making peace with the great Creator. You will recognise but a faint outline of the once beautiful Margaret Norton—she who was always so meek, kind-hearted, unselfish, and uncomplaining; ever studying the comforts and happiness of others before her own; bearing all her troubles—and they were many, and not of her own seeking—without once repining, or unburthening them to others.

“Poor dear, dear, dear Maggy,” exclaims a voice, in a heart-bursting sob, at the opposite side of the bed, which had as yet escaped your notice; for the head is almost buried in the recesses of the bed clothes, the only thing visible being a cluster of black luxuriant ringlets, hanging carelessly over the snowy white shoulders of a lovely young girl on her knees.

“Quick, quick,” cries a vulgar-toned voice, disturbing her, and thrusting a crumpled-up letter into her hand, saying at the same time, with a significant look at the departing one, “It’s from her brother, who’s abroad in foreign countries; p’r’aps she’d like to hear the contents read: it might soothe her last minutes. Pluck up, Miss Fanny, that’s a dearie: recollect, the *tide turns in ten minutes more.*”

Whether it was the cheering tone in which the old nurse uttered this singular piece of information, or the effect of the last few ill-omened words, that aroused the almost heart-broken girl from the lethargic state into which she had fallen, we cannot say; but certain it is that, by an amount of determination and strength of mind bordering on supernatural, she instantly arose, and holding the letter before her sister’s eyes, said, “Dear Maggy, here’s a letter from Richard: can you listen awhile?”

The last word was almost choked in its utterance.

"Yes, yes! quick, as life is ebbing fast," was the whispered rejoinder.

Then, by a strong effort, did Fanny read the contents, which were as follows, and dated from—

"VANCOUVER'S ISLAND, ———.

"My dearest Sister,

"You will, I am sure, be surprised at receiving a letter from me with the above address; but finding, on my arrival in Australia, that the Balaarat diggings were already overcrowded, and but little doing—for many were either on their way back, or had turned 'cattle-feeders'—I determined at once to proceed to the newly found El Dorado, Vancouver's Island, at which place I arrived safely a few days since, in good health and spirits, when I at once purchased a small plot of ground, which I trust will turn out well.

"The process I use in washing the soil for the precious metal is exactly like those round sieves with two handles, which the *Bal* girls use at the Tamar silver-lead mines. And oh, my dear Maggy! if this speculation turns out only a quarter as well as my sanguine expectations predict, I shall soon return, with lots of bright shiny gold; when happy, happy day it will be for us, to meet and part no more in this world. Then we will all live together at our pretty little villa—that quiet, unassuming, peaceful home, which I have but just left. Tell sister Fanny, with my kindest love, that I am treasuring up some strange-looking flowers—at least, the seed—on purpose for her, and will bring the same home with me. Excuse me, dear Maggy, from writing a long letter, as when I think of you all, my heart is too full. Never more, dear sister, will I leave old England. *People don't*

appreciate the country till they are out of it ; and when I look back on the happy happy days we have spent together ; as also with those whom we so esteem, it seems to me now like those wonderful Arabian Night Dreams, too great a happiness to be ever again realised.

" With fondest love to all at home, and kind remembrances to enquiring friends—I dare not enumerate them, for reasons best known to you, dear Maggy, but which must ever remain a secret to the world—farewell, dear sister, and that the all-seeing Being may pour down His choicest blessings on you, is the constant prayer of,

" Your ever affectionate brother,

" RICHARD NORTON.

" P.S.—Remember me to my old labourer John ; but do not tell him I work as a *Bal* girl, as it might hurt his feelings."

It was with great difficulty Fanny Norton could finish reading the letter, for the tears fell fast from her beautiful eyelashes ; but having succeeded in doing so, she was rewarded by the old nurse whispering in her ear the following encouraging words : " That's a dearie, Miss Fanny ; your sister is all right again, till the next *tide turns*, about six hours hence."

True enough, the reading of that letter appeared to revive poor Maggy amazingly,—her respiration became most decidedly easier ; and the look of thankfulness which dazzled from her bright-looking eyes, spoke more than ever words could do, to that sister who was in such agonizing grief. But, listen ! there is a dog howling dismally at some short distance. Leave that chamber instantly, as it is *a sure sign of death* (so the nurse says), for none but the nearest of kindred should be present at such a time, and those only for the purpose of smooth-

ing the pillow of the dear departing one, in helping that earthly being "to prepare to meet her God."

That same midnight, Maggy went quietly off as if in a deep slumber; and although she is dead to this world, yet without a doubt liveth in the next. Let us halt a moment, and kindly ask those

"—— Who have passions for a tear,
To give nature vent and drop it here."

For it is sad to see or hear of one cut off in the full meridian of life, particularly so when the disease which brought it about had originated from *trouble*.

In the parish churchyard that lies close to the adjoining river, is to be seen a plain unassuming tombstone, which marks the sacred spot where the remains of poor Maggy was interred. Fanny, her sister, is, to every one's surprise, still single, although she has received many offers; but the *Mr. Right* has not yet come,—perhaps he lacks the necessary moral courage.

Old Newpark and his *Vice* are still the same kind-hearted, hospitable pair as heretofore, and on no account do they miss the annual "pic-nic." Miss Jemima, their youngest daughter, as before stated, is married and happy, never having once regretted going to Dartmoor; and at present is blessed with an increasing family, one of which our old and esteemed friend, Young America, the yankee skipper, stood god-father to a short time since. That eccentric, but popular individual, left this country for his own; and before taking his departure, bore *record* that, in his humble opinion, no other nation in the world could eclipse old England with regard to her laws on shore, for justice combined with liberty and freedom. Nor were they better administered, for the

British judges had often displayed great wisdom,—one instance of which he quoted, that had, in his opinion, equalled that of Solomon's celebrated one about cutting the child in two. It was this:—"Two women claimed the parentage of a pretty little child, that looked innocently enough around at the numerous bystanders in a court of justice; and after much conflicting evidence *pro* and *con*, the presiding (English) judge being puzzled as to which side the greatest credence was due, happily bethought himself of the following stratagem, and which succeeded admirably, viz., *as to the bosom the child would take, for the rightful mother carried her child away in triumph, amidst the vociferous cheers of those assembled to witness this extraordinary trial.*" But with regard to the Mercantile Navigation laws, Young America said, "Was he a citizen he should kick against them, for many clauses required re-adjustment. Free-trade principles were, without a doubt, a good thing were there reciprocity with other nations; but as the star-spangled banner had NO REASON TO COMPLAIN why it wasn't for him to say much about it, consequently *mum's* the word."

Newpark, junr., or the Young Britisher, as he has been already termed, got on well with Young America, the only cause of complaint the latter had was, he thought the youngster too much like "Oliver Twist,—a always asking for more," carefully keeping all that he had got. The last heard about this wide-awake yankee skipper was from *Punch*, who accidentally saw him in a railway carriage, with his *mute*, attempting bribery with the guard, who felt, as a matter of course, grossly insulted. That officious Jack-in-office, having his eyes always about him, twigged an extraordinary beaked *proboscis dodging his moves* from the wall opposite, which

accounted, in some measure, for his imaginary angry feelings.

It might not be remiss here to state the principal topic of conversation between those two enlightened, wide-awake individuals on their journey, after the much desired privilege had been reluctantly granted, as also their opinions of affairs in general.

The mate was a regular go-ahead *green Yankee*, and, as he expressed himself, when he had Young America to back him, "always came the *right side up, with care*."

The first mentioned was about their plenipo in China, both arriving at the rather lynch-law conclusion that the "'coon," notwithstanding the clause of "*the most favoured nation*," would have something worse to fight against than the "sea fencibles," or that brave regiment termed the "'Orribles," in defence of his policy with the Celestial Empire, when he got back to the States; for as Green Yankee said, 'Any schoolboy could play 'follow my leader;' but acting the part of lop-lolly boy to the Russians was a tarnation disgrace to the star-spangled banner."

With regard to affairs in general, both said, that although their countrymen were PROUD of *striping* a once oppressive power *themselves*, and driving them off their shores, they would at a moment's notice, in case of emergency, or that crittur over the water *snapping at his bone* (turning rusty), send quickly to the rescue the Nigurania Riflemen and the Kentucky Rangers, who were ALWAYS READY, and would soon make frogs'-meat and lobscouse of the mercenary bravadoes—the latter particularly, who had been introduced to him (the crittur) before, in a manner which astonished his weak nerves, at a time when he was *loafing* in front of an oyster saloon in Old Broadway, skulking up and down like a turkey rooster,

playing with him like a 'possum round a tree, when he hadn't a twenty-five cent. piece to shake on the slab table inside, or to tinkle against a tombstone.

"I'm darned," said Green Yankee, "If ever NAP., with his so-called fighting colonels, put their feet on the Fatherland, they'd only be too glad to make tracts of it like thunder, I guess: and then, with our myriads of privateers, we would choke the Channel right up, taking care to make a clean sweep of all their ports, Cherbourg inclusive. That's one of the principal reasons we'd not sign the privateering treaty. No, no; the "wool" was not to be hauled over our eyes, Master Parleyvouz; don't you reckon on't."

The foregoing is a slight specimen of their conversation, taken as nearly as possible *verbatim* during the journey before referred to. We live in hopes that our cousin will cross our path again some day or other, feeling convinced that, notwithstanding his peculiarity of being a little too national [EVERY ONE HIS PRIDE], his heart is fixed in the right spot.

As for Outlaw and his sister 'Riar—or Pink Muslin, as she has been generally called, neither have changed their condition in life; he being a confirmed old bachelor, whilst she is one of the few good-tempered old maids, who make it a point of not only being always cheerful themselves, but striving to make others around them the same; and although some of her neighbours have passed ill-natured remarks about her low taste, as they term it, in being so well up in Dickens's vulgar characters, she goes on just the same.

The last grand feat accomplished by her was the getting up of a "public archery meeting," at her relations' on the other side of the water. It will be unnecessary our saying it turned out well, as everything the

imitator of Miggs took in hand generally succeeded ; for whether it was the adjoining fruit garden or the sport that attracted the public, no one could tell ; - but certain it is, the attendance was immense, and amply remunerated the owner of the grounds for the trouble and expense taken about it, with a slight overplus, which was charitably given to the parish clothing club, perhaps better known as the Dorcas Society.

With regard to Pink Muslin's skill at the longbow, the critics pronounced favourably of her altogether, making due allowances of course ; and the target was, a short time after being pitched, completely riddled by those assembled, many having attained large scores.

Amongst the company were the Misses Hewton, who, strange to say, scored each an equal number, which drew forth from one of the fat red-cheeked young ladies, who were present, the following sage remark, "What a strange coincidence !" and the before-mentioned young ladies chimed in with their respective acquiescence as regards the justness of the remark, thus, "Very !" "Isn't it ?" and "Extremely so !" which no one present felt inclined to contradict. These are also, with the exception of one of the Misses Hewton, still unmated ; and although our young beauty has just whispered slyly, "Marry them all off," the tempting advice must be resisted, and the startling fact stuck to.

Jack Seabreeze, the jolly old Admiralty agent, is still alive and kicking, and, as in days of yore, is fond of arguing the point, sticking to his guns with all the tenacity and stubbornness of an old salt till his memory fails him, when as usual he 'bout ship unknowingly, and stands on the other tack.

A short time since, this worthy specimen of olden times was nearly getting into a little bit of a *fracas*, through

his unconquerable habit of yarning ; for during dinner on board one of the regular-going mail steamers, whilst sitting *at his place*—that is, on the right of the commander, —two Frenchmen being his *vis-à-vis*, he, as usual, after drawing attention in a loud voice, which was heard by all present, to the circumstance that they were then in *Trafalgar Bay*, began, as was his wonted custom when cheese came on the table, fighting the *battle of the Nile*, gathering for that purpose all the spare pieces of bread from his neighbours, in order to represent the position of the two fleets on the eventful 1st of August.

Having placed sixteen of the bits in Aboukir Bay —formed by a number of wine glasses placed close together—to represent the French fleet at anchor in line of battle, forming an obtuse angle ; and fifteen outside, for the English, being the thirteen seventy-fours, a fifty-gun frigate, and a brig, he then commenced by saying, “ Look here, gentlemen, this is the position of the two fleets when first seen by the Zealous. We that moment,” continued he, suiting the action to the word by turning each of the fifteen round, “ hauled our wind, the admiral, old Nelson, signalling to attack the enemy’s van and centre. In we went *holus bolus*. Here’s the Goliath and Zealous going in first, the rest following, taking, as you will perceive, their stations with promptitude and alacrity. The action, gentlemen, commenced at sunset, with an ardour and vigour which it is impossible for me to describe. In twelve minutes afterwards, the van ship of the enemy, *Le Guerrier*, was dismasted. I’ll take him away,” continued he, throwing one of the bits carelessly down the table, being in a state of great excitement. “ In the meantime, the other pieces, representing *Le Conquérant*, *Le Spartiate*, and a few more, following in the same wake. At half-past 9, or say 10 o’clock, gentle-

men, the French admiral's ship, L'Orient, of 120 guns, blew up with a most tremendous concussion." Here the old hero, in his excitement, threw a large bit of bread, representing L'Orient, with great force up through the skylight, accidentally hitting the officer of the watch (who was casually looking down listening) right on the nose, and falling down again on the table in many pieces, just as if it were the wreck—masts, spars, yards, &c., which had been carried to a vast height by the explosion.

"At three in the morning, gentlemen, the firing ceased, for the victory had been secured in the van, when such British ships as were in condition, moved down upon the fresh vessels of the enemy. At five o'clock all the enemy's fleet were in our possession, with the exception of those that had been destroyed, and the rearmost two, the Guillaume Tell and Le Genereux, which, Messieurs, I beg to return to you with thanks," handing to the two Frenchmen opposite, with much politeness, the two remaining pieces, the rest having been distributed about the saloon, in various places.

The Johnny Frogoes at first pretended ignorance of the English language ; but during the spirited recital, it became evident to some of the lookers-on that every word was understood, which the old Admiralty agent, in his zeal to perform his duty with credit to himself and to his country, completely overlooked, fancying all the time he was safe from them at least ; when, lo and behold, one of his *vis-à-vis* stood up and said in broken English, with his eyes flashing with rage, " It is all vera fien you trying to tell us *dat leetle storie* ; but you did forget de two frigattes dat cut de cables, and stood out to sea : de next time, *s'il vous plaît*, tell it correctly ; *comprenez vous ?* "

Here the Frenchman grinned horribly, seeing which, old *Bags* muttered out, in high glee, "Run away? ah, ah, all right! we English always forget that."

This got the other one on his legs, foaming at the mouth, who made the following pretty little speech, addressing himself particularly to old Seabreeze, "I dare say you tink yourself a man of great consequence; but dat leetle bag which is sealed so carefully, and which you have de sole charge of from one port to another, only contains a blank envelope and a cheap penny paper, ah, ah! And look here, *mon ami*; s'pose I tell one leetle, one vera short storie about de Crimea?"

"Malakhoff? Yes! Redan? No!"

Here the old Admiralty agent could contain himself no longer, but rose hurriedly, his face being as red as the comb of a turkey cock; tucked up the cuffs of his sleeves, and said, with marked emphasis, "Let me see whether you are like your colonels—all talk, too fond of *crowing on their own dunghill*. Let me tell you, in good old English, that we've licked ye *before*, we'd lick ye *again*, and if you are not contented with that, why here's at the both of ye *now*: come on."

As the brave old man said this, he was about to let drive in right-down earnest across the table, John Bull fashion, when the *plucky* little man, sitting between the infuriated belligerents, timely interposed, begging both to be pacified, as such conduct could not be tolerated for one moment. This put a stop to the affair.

The Frenchmen left at the very first port, to the great satisfaction of old *Bags*, who, when the yarn got abroad, was in consequence invited to dine with an Admiral, where he actually ate the very next slice to that which his host had partaken of, an honour he had never dreamt of during the whole of his useful career.

But it wasn't all praise the old Admiralty agent received for his pains, as our "rehearsing purser," who was present and in charge of the DEPARTMENT, could testify. That clever *Nipcheese* had grown extremely cumbersome of late; and as he never acknowledged eating anything, it must be presumed he resembled the ancients of centuries back, who fattened on the *savour* only of the meat. But the sight of so much bread wasted was too much of a good thing; and when the engagement had ended, he took old *Bags* to task rather severely, telling him that if he destroyed the French fleet often in that way, there would soon be a *famine in Egypt*; which little bit of witticism drew down upon the alleged aggressor a roar of laughter.

When last seen, this fine old specimen of a British tar was in good health, and highly delighted at seeing the three letters G.P.O. in the window of a deck house on board a large mail steam-ship bound for Alexandria. He says his ropes shall be coiled peacefully up now, and no mistake; and as he gives one of his cheerful good-humoured laughs, loquaciously remarks, that "if all the banks in England or America break, it won't disturb his rest, or ruffle his pillow the least; for the simple reason, that he had nothing in them: such being the advantage of a poor man."

Jack Trussletree tells some cock-and-bull story about writing his "Confessions" some of these odd days, if he could be got into the mind of so doing; there is not the slightest doubt but that there would be many *real facts* worth the reading. He is still in the Paddle-wheel Steam Navigation Company, whose ships were also ALWAYS READY in doing their share in the Crimean Transport Service.

Jack says that he would apply for a skipper's berth at

once, were it not that he has a strong objection to wearing pegtops as skipper's uniform, and feels a little ticklish round the neck. Perhaps when his reminiscences come out, some explanation will be given of the foregoing rather ambiguous language. He is, as of old, an acknowledged acquisition to any ship; for on the most melancholy occasions, his staves are irresistible, keeping his brother officers constantly on the grin. Having fulfilled our promise which was made about reporting him at Lloyd's, with the news that he was, like Christmas, "a-coming," we will bid him good-bye, hoping that he will have a safe and prosperous voyage over the critic shoals.

The last heard about Judge Home was, that he had arrived once more in England, and written to his old travelling companion, Acquilier. The contents of the letter, as nearly as could be deciphered (for it had been either chalked down roughly with a chopstick, or penned when he was smoking a Manilla cheroot, and sipping his glass of crusty old port), are as follow :—

" LONDON, ——— ———.

" My dear Acquilier,

" You will be surprised to learn that I am once more in old England; but the fact of the matter is, there were such squabbles and bickerings amongst the particular class that, of all others, ought to have shown a good example to the community of Hong Kong, that I *cut my lucky*, and am happy to say can once more breathe freely.

" I won't now enter fully into the particulars of what I have slightly referred to; for what with the 'Chow-chow case,' in which Ahlum the baker played an unenviable part; the piracies committed by Manchow Wong,

and the alleged transgressions of the Samquei, with various other little exciting incidents too numerous to mention here, why enough might be written to fill up all the mail boxes that are transmitted to England in a twelvemonth from that insalubrious part. But, *mum* at present; when we meet, you shall hear all, *viva voce*, lots of time, lots of time, you know.

"With regard to the English merchants there, you already know my opinion of *them*; for, without exception, they are the most liberal, hospitable, jolly set of fellows that ever smoked a Manilla cheroot or sipped a glass of whisky toddy. In a word, they are merchant princes. There is not to be found a single champagne swindler amongst the lot. This, I know, is stale news to you, so I'll talk about something else. What do you think? On my way home, *via* Marseilles, I met with a little occurrence at one of the French *cafés*, which reminded me of your *hungry* dialogue at the railway restaurant at Amiens. I give it you in full, as follows, *pro bono publico* :—

An Englishman (entering café, and addressing himself to the garçon)—Je suis femme.

Garçon—Ce n'est pas possible, Monsieur, avec ce grand moustache.

Gent.—Non, J'ai une femme.

Garçon—J'en suis bien aise et comment se porte, Madame.

Gent. (getting very excited)—J'ai une horrible femme.

Garçon—Ah, que c'est malheureux !

"I shall only say, by way of interpretation—for I know the extent of your French—he ought to have said at the commencement, '*J'ai faim*,' which means, 'I am hungry.' You must find out the remainder yourself, for I'm in a hurry to conclude, having some *pigeon* to look after.

"Hoping you are well, believe me to be, with my very best *chin-chin*,

"Yours sincerely,

"JOHN HOME.

"P.S.—My successor may go to—Hong Kong for me."

Tom Jones, the *Krany*, formerly at Balaclava as commissariat clerk, has had the extreme good fortune of taking out a patent, which rejoices in such an extraordinary name, that no Englishman can venture to pronounce it correctly without running a great risk of dislocating his jawbone. The grand object of the patent, and for which it has been duly registered, is "the very best method of cutting old women's toe nails." Let those laugh who win—Tom derives a very fair income from the profits realised, for there are numbers sold by the numerous agents he has distributed throughout the country for that purpose; consequently he is now both able and willing to satisfy all his creditors, and like the rest of the world, *never backward in recommending* his tailor and shoemaker, of whom he has the highest opinion.

Tom's favourite theme is still the Crimean war; and the last pithy remark of his heard on that subject was, "That if the French soldiers threw their medals away, he was *not* going to follow the example."

It might perhaps be as well to state here, that this Tom Jones is no relative whatever of Miss 'Riar Jones, not even a ninety-ninth cousin.

As for Sir Robert, in quoting the words of a letter written by a distinguished official in the Crimea to a certain admiral at Constantinople: "*The man who was worth his weight in gold during the Russian war*"—he was last seen in the Red Sea, located in a kind of round

house, at the rather un-aristocratic end of a fine steamship: he commands the "forecastle." In the aforesaid domicile, which Sir Robert calls his *sanctum sanctorum*, are to be seen, if report speaks truly, many little curios, relics, as it were, of the late Crimean war, the most conspicuous of which is an admirable bust or statuette of Her Majesty directly facing the entrance. This work of art had originally graced the bows of a fine ship, acting the part of what is technically termed "figure-head; and when the said vessel, which was, singularly enough, named "Her Majesty," drifted on shore at Eupatoria during a gale of wind, and became in consequence a total wreck, it was not in Sir Robert's nature to allow the Cossacks an opportunity of purloining that which would allow them to say, "Her Majesty was their prisoner." So, at the imminent risk of his own life, with that of his dauntless boat's crew, made the venture, and succeeded in carrying away the figure-head in triumph to his own ship, where he had it placed in the most commanding position of her magnificent and gorgeous saloon. Since that time proper care and attention was paid to the attirement of the same most suitable to the seasons of the year, or the different climes it visited; and Sir Robert tells his old China friends, with whom he is on exceedingly good terms, that he ought not to complain, as he was always honoured with the presence of "Her Majesty;" and besides, if his little services had not been recognized by his countrymen, perhaps it is because they were ignorant of it.

The old China Rangers, as he calls them, who are in fact *merchant princes*, are PROUD to think one of those who had been brought up in their employ, and commanded ships under their flag, had done his part so well during the late war, and in consequence can never make

enough of him. To them Sir Robert is always *at home*, but others he treats with all due politeness and courtesy due to their position as passengers, fulfilling his duties appertaining to a station which the *Thunderer* designates, *landlord of a floating hotel*, with credit to himself and honour to his employers. It is with much reluctance we bid Sir Robert adieu; and whilst doing so our pulse throbs quickly, as thought upon thought recur to our mind of those noble deeds herein but faintly pourtrayed, which he has done for the good of his country, and oftentimes when dame Fortune was lying at his feet tempting him to turn aside from that path which he had chosen. *He is but one of a class*: others are there to be found who equalled him in the zeal and energy displayed towards the due accomplishment of that service with which the commander-in-chief had entrusted them. Such chivalry will, without a doubt, live when they are *no more*.

Last, but not least, comes in regular rotation the jolly old Commodore, about whose little eccentricities many stories have been told, so Harry Acquilier said. We hope due allowance will be made by our readers with regard to the accuracy of the same, when it is stated by us, that the aforesaid "stretchers" had passed through many hundred of ears before they reached his, and consequently been duly embellished by every succeeding narrator. Captain Jawdy is gone on his long voyage, and with him the last emblem of his type, at least in the P. and O., has departed also; and we take this opportunity of testifying to one great fact, which no one can gainsay, viz., he served his employers faithfully for a number of years. His country was also greatly benefitted by his services whilst employed in the Crimean Merchant Transport Service. Many of his deeds and

actions in this world are worthy of imitation, and perhaps there are a few better left alone: let the former be remembered only, and the latter forgotten. His remains were borne to the grave by a vast assemblage, mostly those who had been someway or the other mixed up with him in his professional duties, and had taken the opportunity, as we at present do ourselves, of paying the last tribute of respect to the memory of him who is now no more.

CHAPTER XXI.

THIS being the concluding chapter, perhaps it might be considered respectful on our part in asking the "young beauty," who has so patiently followed our whimsical fancies through these pages, the important and interesting question of what scene would she like painted as a grand *finale* to the whole? Should it be a brilliant one? The opening piece of the well-known Italian opera, "Rigoletto," to wit, where the eye becomes dazzled with the splendour and magnificence brought so suddenly to view, when that simple mechanical arrangement of drawing the curtain aside takes place, beholding all at once a grand ball right before you; and whilst the numerous fairy-like figures skip gracefully about, their little tiny feet seeming not to touch the ground, keeping beautiful time meanwhile to the delicious soul-inspiring music,—the spectators, including royalty itself, witnessing this phantasm of fairyland, where gaiety and happiness seem to reign supreme, awakening in their bosoms every feeling and emotion that's akin to pleasure and delight,

—the thought, perhaps, will come across your mind, that after all it is but one of those transient imaginary idealities got up for the occasion, more particularly so if you take a peep through an opera glass adjusted to the focus, *stern reality*, for then you will be convinced that amongst that *gay troupe* before you, many carry “an aching heart beneath a smiling face.” Leave that artificial throng and come away with us, for your heart is not in it, and *hora fugit*, as we used to say at school.

But here's the next picture. How would you like a nice Christmas party, consisting of about two or three dozen or so young lads and lasses, with a sprinkling of good-tempered seniors, who have the good manners to play a rubber or two at whist, while the young folks have a polka, mazurka, a Varsoviana, or a jolly good old English country dance, tripping it up and down the middle and back again at a good round pace, all bounding merriment and careless glee,—singing sentimental ballads, and prudently eschewing operatic duets, for both papa and mamma have set their faces against it, and won't have it at any price? Then there's hunt the slipper and forfeits,—the latter making some unlucky *wight* perform that most difficult feat without giving some little offence to *one* of the many present who lays claim to those enviable gifts, viz., “to kneel to the wittiest, bow to the prettiest, and kiss the one that he loves best,” as also *Jacob's ladder*, and the enviable part of *post* receiving in return for your professional rap tap at the door, such a nice little *souvenir* that speaks perhaps more than words could ever do, with regard to the sentiments of him who gave the same.

Will this suit your taste? Most assuredly it will; but it is not the scene intended for you here, our excuse being that a certain duty has to be performed of giving

some little account of that homely circle, who has been introduced in these pages at the commencement, when suffering from misfortune ; and although the picture is neither an opera house, with all its galaxy of beauty and fashion, or a gay dance, yet it will not be altogether devoid of interest ; and after all perhaps, who knows, be just as acceptable to the true English heart as the two preceding, forming, as it does, one of those national traits and peculiarities which Britons think so much about when absent from their country, and appearing to the foreigner to be one of those anomalies that cannot be understood.

Without further ado, we will inform our " favourite " that it is a Christmas-day dinner party, the locality being at a farm house in a rural district, the *dramatis personæ* consisting of a family group, who had, according to usual custom at this season of reconciliation and re-union, assembled once more together and around the parental festive board, added another link to that chain of brotherly, sisterly love which had been instilled into them in the days of their childhood, when, with feelings fresh and passions unruffled, the plant had taken good root ; and that happy couple, who are now doing the honours at each end of the table with such gladsome looks and cheerful faces, were now reaping the rich harvest of pure affection which they had, as in duty bound, then so carefully sown.

But halt a moment : you shall take a peep into that oak wainscoated parlour, dressed up as it is with branches of holly, ivy, bays, and rosemary, with scarlet berries clustering amidst the leaves, and that main ingredient of enjoyment, the visible heart and soul of Christmas is there also, the great blazing fire being emblematical of, and in perfect keeping with, that festive

season of the year. It was a huge heaped-up all-attracting glare, and was undoubtedly the household idol,—the genius of the meeting,—being the representative of all their warm emotions and bright thoughts: the glowing eye of the room, the inciter to mirth, the amalgamator of age and sex; in fact, *the* universal relish. Nor must those two well-known full-length portraits be forgotten, that were hung up in their proper places, the eyes seeming, as they scanned that little circle of happy faces, to fill with pleasure, and beam, as it were, with smiles of recognition on those who once more have so joyously met; and from their lips a prayer would seem to ascend to the Author and Giver of all good things, for the bounteous mercies bestowed on them in thus preserving through another long year that happy group untouched, keeping the tyrant death, and all contagious maladies, from entering therein.

The “baze vial,” also, which was stuck up in a corner opposite the Christmas moat, with its fine open countenance, looking as brown as a berry, appeared both ready and willing to sound its *intonate* notes in thanksgiving on the occasion, and joining with those who were seated round that snug old-fashioned mahogany table, which was heavily laden with the good things of this world,—roast beef and plum pudding being the most predominant in adding fervour and devotion to the otherwise not an uninteresting scene.

In all probability that family group will be recognized ere this, being no less than old Middleton, with his true-hearted partner and children.

But what is this? There are two present who do not rejoice in the name of Middleton, yet seem perfectly at home and look very happy. Why, it is our old friend Dick Norton, or Farmer Dick, as he has been generally

called, and absolutely sitting between the host and Miss Je-a-n-e, as he used to call her in by-gone days, but now, strange to say, addresses her as Dear Jenny, and in a most affectionate tone too. Yes, he has every right to do so, for she is become Mrs. Norton ; and a nice loving pair they seem to make. Well, wonders will never cease, for who would have imagined the "Devonshire Farmer," to have succeeded so well in all his undertakings, verifying that word or two of advice given to him by way of encouragement by his old friend Harry Acquilier when on the beach or hard, and about to embark with a heavy heart in that little steamer which bore him away from those he loved so dearly.

" Oftentimes," so Dick would say whilst recounting his adventures to his friends, " did I think of Harry's words to me of, ' When our prospects look dark and lowering perhaps it will all turn out for the best, accept this as a good omen ; ' and at times when I was almost disheartened these cheering sentences would recur to my mind, driving away all former troubles, and instead of looking back, would go at it again, and picture in my own imagination this happy future, which I little thought then lay before me."

True it was, that small plat of ground, mentioned in poor Maggy's letter, which he had purchased with his little *all*, turned out indifferently at first, notwithstanding the hard manual labour and toil bestowed on it by this true specimen of nature's husbandmen ; but, strange to say, directly the name of *British Columbia* was given to the island his luck changed, and in an incredibly short space of time, Dick's perseverance under great difficulties was crowned with that success energy at all times deserves, for the *precious metal* came plentiful at last, and not being over greedy, soon contented himself, taking

his departure as soon as possible after for old England, which he no sooner reached than he put the question, in a straightforward manly way, to Jenny Middleton of "Yes or No?" receiving in return the following candid reply:—"I shan't say no, as I think you suffered enough whilst toiling on the borders of *Constance Bay* in British Columbia. Consequently, Dick looks back with mingled feelings of gratitude and pleasure on that day which saw him quit old England's peaceful shores, being the first step which led him to that far distant isle, where his star of fate shone bright, and is at the present moment attracting the notice of the civilized world, for, without a doubt, that little spot will in a short space of time bid fair to become the emporium of our trade, possibly restoring England's prestige in the North Pacific.

Such is Dick Norton's opinion, which, by the bye, ought not to be laughed at now, for since he has travelled his ideas, as it were, have been enlarged, and the view that he takes of matters in general is in a very liberal and enlightened spirit; and altogether Jenny is proud of her husband, for the late "*Devonshire Farmer*," in addition to his handsome countenance and strong muscular proportions, was possessed of that raw material capable, rough hewn as it was, of being worked and receiving the brightest polish, which knowledge and mixing with the world could alone bestow. Then Jenny is so delighted to see what deference and respect is paid to his opinions by those who ask them, for the traveller is always listened to with much attention.

Both Dick and his wife Jenny are in high glee at receiving news from Harry Acquier, whom they still hold in high esteem, never speaking well or often enough of that individual's good qualities, the former taunting

himself, at times, for having once attempted to hurt his feelings with regard to the **MERCANTILE MARINE TRANSPORT MEDAL**, which he is sure *now* was so *richly deserved*. And the latter used often to think during the cold winter nights, whilst surrounded with every luxury and comfort herself, of those poor sailors of the C——o who had been invalided home from the Black Sea through exposure and over exertion whilst employed in the Merchant Transport Service, doing their very best in honour of their cheer, "Self-reliance and the ould country,"—the sad tale of which had been related by him,—when one day she made inquiries on the subject, and found that although the nation (for whose honour and glory those brave fellows had shortened their days) did not stretch forth the hand of charity, or provide them with a *place of refuge* for peaceably ending their days in, yet that great and liberal company in whose ship they had the good fortune to be in, did not desert them in their disabled forlorn state—their hour of need; and to any one who may have doubts on the subject, Jenny, or rather Mrs. Norton,—that true-hearted Englishwoman,—begs us to refer them to the company's various depôts, where many are to be seen to this day "doing their little" in grateful acknowledgment for their weekly allowances, being themselves living vouchers of their employers' charity.

Also the poor widows and orphans of those who had gone to their last resting place through complaints which had originated from that severe season in the Euxine, they were even cared for, at least those whose husbands and fathers had sailed in the C——o, or any of the ships belonging to her owners.

With regard to the accuracy of the first mentioned, Jenny begs us to say, the topic in confirming that state-

ment is too sacred to touch upon here, suffice it to say those *bereaved ones* have an opportunity given them of earning an honest livelihood.

What a great deal might be said about these poor creatures' troubles; but let us pass on, for our pen is not equal to the task, even if we had the space and the will. The orphans come next. They are placed in a school endowed by the company; and should any one feel sufficiently interested to enquire how they are cared for, they will discover *a hand of kindness* benevolently stretched forth to train them to some useful calling when arrived at the years of maturity. *These are facts not generally known.*

But although the foregoing are provided with their "salt," many, very many of *their class* are destitute; and Jenny fancies if we would listen at their hovels, low wailings of helplessness, and cries of sorrow and suffering might be heard, which would pierce the hardest hearted and most callous even to the quick, for they are numbered with the homeless, fatherless poor, who at night-fall huddle together for the sake of warmth, or creep with their famishing offspring to cheerless resting places, and in the sleep of exhaustion forget their misery until they awaken to its sad truth in the morning.

To them did that tender-hearted amiable creature, in honour to her sex be it said, give the generous tribute of her sympathy, aiding those in the vicinity of her own dwelling, in procuring shelter to the homeless, clothing the naked, and helping the weak-hearted, whilst in return plentiful showers of blessings have undoubtedly been invoked from the right source for her by those who so truly benefitted by her charities.

Having thus given some explanation of the why and the wherefore of those two being present at old Middleton's

Christmas dinner-party who did not rejoice in the family name, we will enumerate the remainder one by one. There was Jack the eldest, with his comical-looking countenance and queer copper-plate sayings, sitting lovingly beside his sister Bessy, who had grown to a fine handsome girl. Those two were now inseparable, and reminds one of the following couplet,—

“ We were and are—I am even as thou art :
Beings who never each other can resign.”

Laughing-eyed whiskerless Ned is there too, looking the very quintessence of a confirmed old bachelor ; and notwithstanding the dead set Miss 'Riar Jones made at him when last in his company, still remains firm and steadfast, his sister Jenny being the isolated one of the family who thinks he should not be given up as irreclaimable, and consequently placed on the “ *unattached list* ” as yet. Whether any little secret lurks in that young lady's bosom with regard to her pretty sister-in-law's sentiments as well as of her brother's, she having had good opportunities of watching both closely, no one can vouchsafe to say, and, if known, should not be divulged here, resting assured ourselves that Jenny must have some grounds whereupon to back her opinions. Lastly come the two brothers from London, who were glad enough to leave their close confinement,—

And loiter 'mid the haunts of youth,—
Of love, of purity, and truth ;
To tread those much-loved scenes once more,
That they so oft had trod before.

* * * * *

Woods, glens, and well remembered places,—
Their childhood's friends with home's glad faces.

Both were looking well, the delightful odour from old Father Thames not affecting them during the winter months, and like the rest of us they were living in hopes, if they died in despair, that the *crying evil* would soon be rectified. The *dramatis personæ* having been fully described, we will now act the part of eaves-dropper, and listen to what they are saying.

"When did you hear from Cousin and Mrs. Harry?" asked Ned of his brother-in-law, Dick Norton.

"A day or two since, wasn't it?" answered that person, with an enquiring look at his wife.

"Yes," returned Jenny with a smile, "dated from off the *Burlings*, in which he desired to be remembered to you all, saying he should soon be home, as the wives and sweethearts at Southampton had got hold of the *tow rope*."

"What did he mean by that?" asked Bessy, which no one felt inclined to answer for a moment, when Dick came to the rescue.

"Since none of you seem inclined to give an explanation of that piece of nautical phraseology, I suppose I must, so here goes. By the *tow rope* is meant the imaginary wishes and hopes of Jack's friends on shore, which is supposed to have a most decided power over the elements, giving their *homeward bound* gallant craft a fresh and rattling fair wind, consequently hastening her on in that cheerless tract which will soon bring those on board to the haven where so many, with anxious and beating hearts, are awaiting them, ready to give those wanderers of the seas the welcome they deserve and so much look forward to. And it is invariably the case, when approaching their native land with a bright blue sky and fav'ring gale, the sailor casts his longing eyes ahead, feasting himself greedily upon that one joyful

thought of meeting those he loves, saying to his jovial shipmates, with a *cheerily men, ho! the girls have got hold of the tow rope*, that piece of cordage being supposed to be fast to the bow, which is proudly dashing the silvery spray aside, propelled by the white spreading wings which are set fair to the breeze. The credit of all being given by Jack (with his usual superstition) to those whom he imagines are giving the line a pull, in order to bring their hour of meeting nearer if possible. This is the secret of Harry's *tow rope*.

"A very good idea too," exclaimed Bessy quietly. "But whereabouts are those *Burlings* he dates from? Is it the island off the Portuguese coast? or the one Harry Lorrequer speaks of, as being near the *Emerald Isle*?"

"The former," replied Dick; and then in continuation said, "the latter spot is in all likelihood the place that has hitched the 'Atlantic Telegraph,' which unfortunately cannot be found."

So they chatted away, thinking only of their friends; and the old gentleman,—see what a pleasant way he has of making his children feel at *home*, doing away with all etiquette and social necessities and the like, and enjoying himself with them to his heart's content; and notwithstanding that plum pudding and mince pies are sure to give him a fit of indigestion, thinks it a solemn duty to partake of them at this particular time, adhering to the good old Christmas custom with a determined heroism perfectly astonishing. His happy partner, also, whilst imbibing a small quantity of sweet warm exhilarating negus, and partaking of a portion of the frosted mountain of plum cake, cannot help, as she views the happy faces and radiant eyes around her, carrying her mind back to that little juvenile council of war, which had assembled

together so many years before under her auspices, for the purpose of determining their career in life, and helping him, who was then disheartened, in bearing up against the misfortunes of this world, the results of which had been so happily crowned with success. Well might we exclaim,—Oh! the wealth of love and affection and gratitude garnered up in trusting hearts, for here it is exemplified, proving that its brightest memories tend, when most needed, in making “a sunshine in a shady place.”

One word in conclusion before the drop-scene falls, and we have done. These few pages, which the author had the temerity to write when prevented from exercising the duties of his profession through a severe accident, were not only the means of relieving him from the *ennui* of inactivity, but brought back to memory old recollections—pleasant reminiscences of by-gone fleeting events, which would exact a smile even when suffering the most acute and agonizing pain, making the heart that would have been otherwise sad and depressed, light and cheerful; and should the narrative itself succeed in enlisting the interest of—

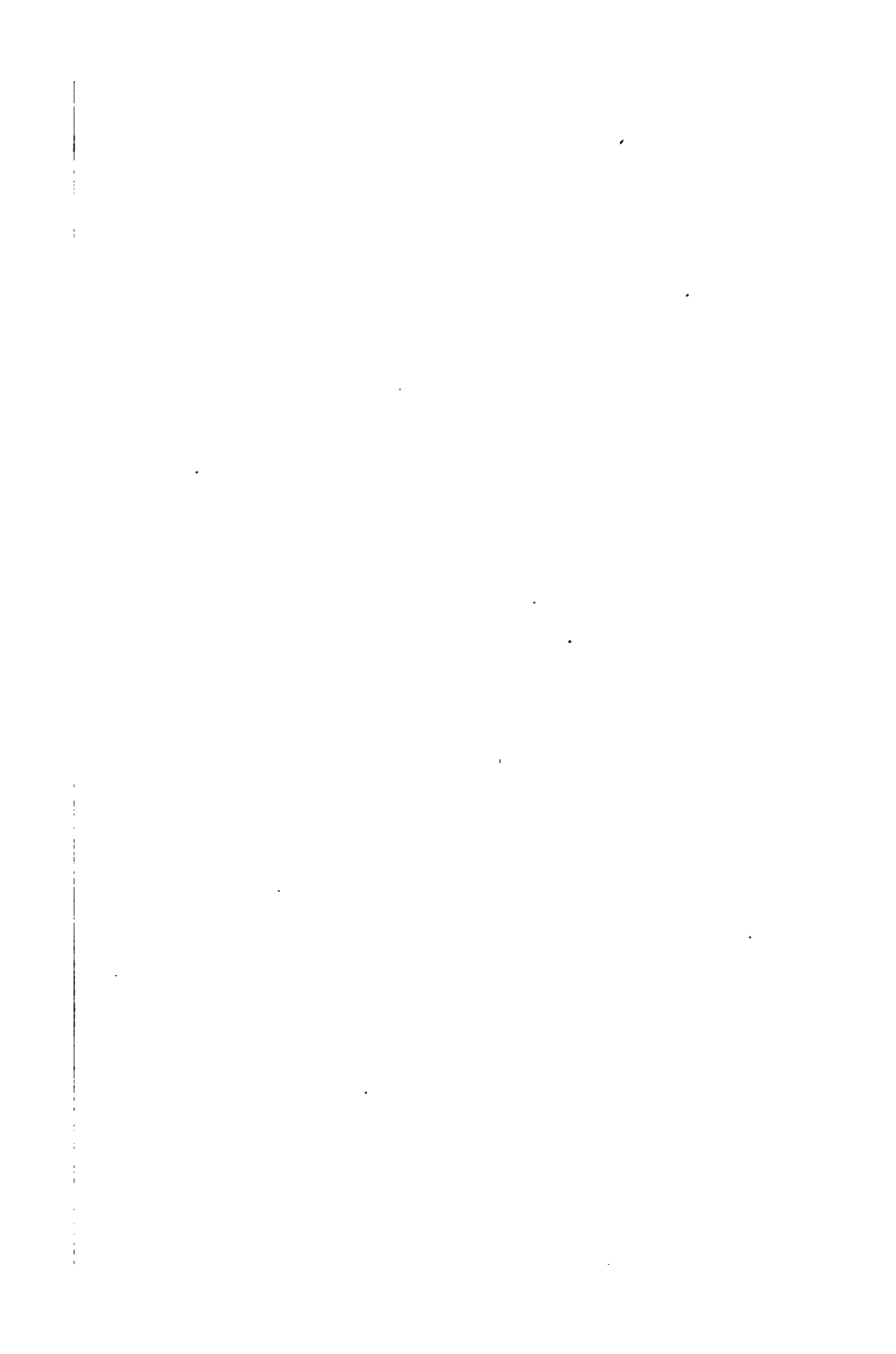
“Ye gentlemen of England,
That live at home at ease,”

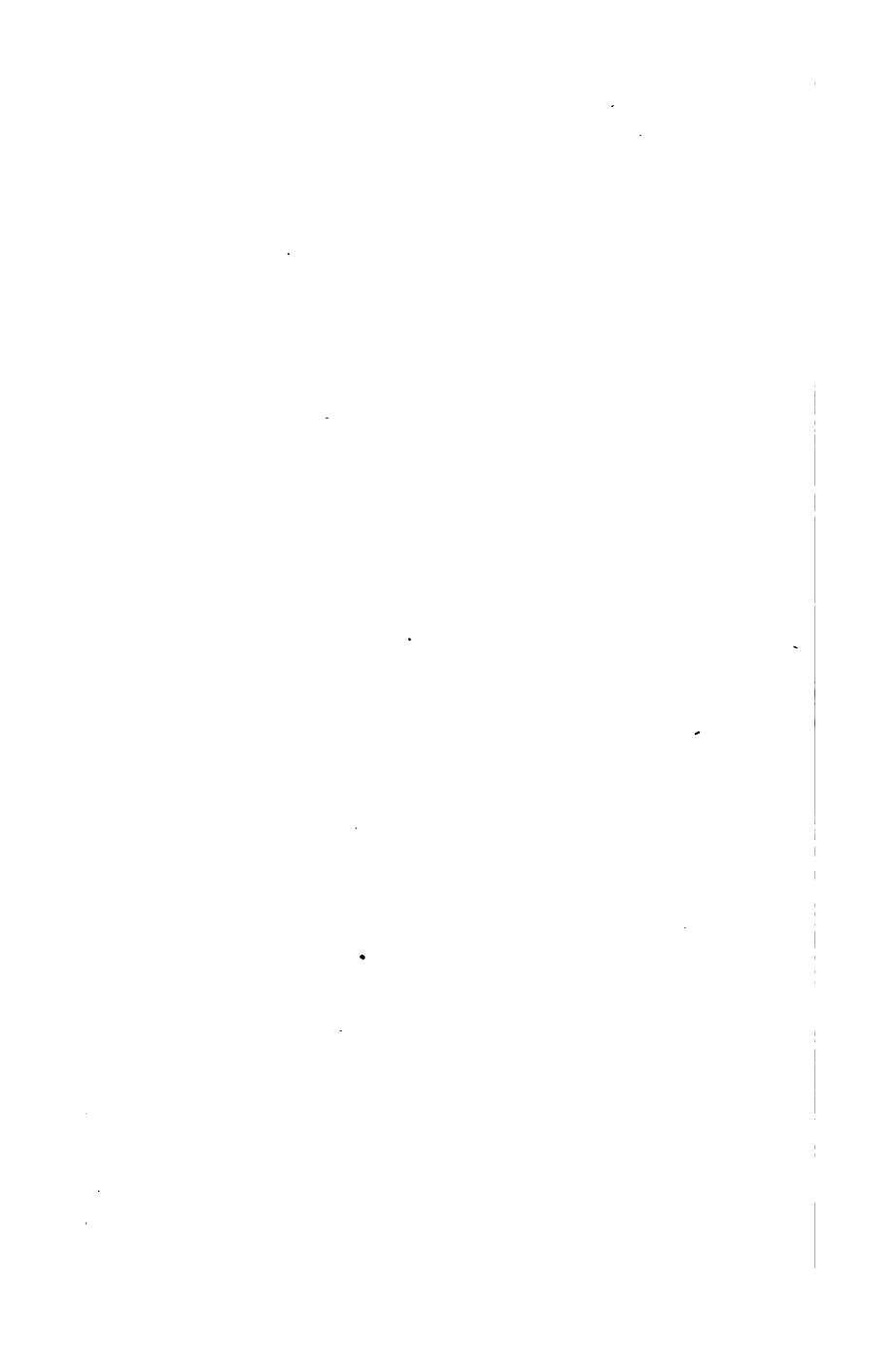
on behalf of that unrecognized class designated **MERCANTILE MARINE**, who are **ALWAYS READY** in *any case of emergency*; or of drawing from the general reader a spark of sympathy to the memory of those brave tars that died whilst employed in the Merchant Transport Service, of whom it could be rightly said,—

“They England’s call obey’d with cheerful heart,
And in her wars played no ignoble part;
Stout hearts and **READY** hands in numbers gave,
To help Britannia triumph o’er the wave :”

an additional object will have been gained, and instead of looking back with dread to that hour of helplessness, will think of it only with feelings of pleasure. Kind reader, it is left for you to decide whether we might add the concluding sentence,—not unmixed with PRIDE.









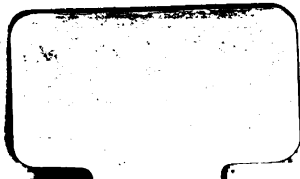
STORMS & SHIPWRECKS.



The Committee of the "SHIPWRECKED MARINERS' SOCIETY" are constrained earnestly to APPEAL to the Public for HELP to succour the tempest-tossed Mariners cast upon our coasts, and the Widows and Orphans of the drowned. The Society relieved 7,113 persons in 1857, and 8,215 in the last year; making, in two years, 15,328! The number of wrecks have annually increased at the rate of 300 for several years past, and the excessive demands on the Charity from this cause have exceeded the income of 1857 and 1858 by upwards of £2000. The Committee confidently hope that the charitable public will not withhold from them the means of clothing the naked mariner cast upon our shores, and sending him to his home; or, when drowned, of mitigating the distress of his desolate widow and orphans.— Job xxix 12-13; Acts xxviii 1-2.

Donations & Annual Subscriptions will be thankfully received in Stamps, Cheques, or Post-office Orders, by Messrs. Williams, Deacon, and Co., Birchin Lane, City, Bankers to the Society; by all the London and Country Bankers; by the several Metropolitan Army and Navy Agents; by the Honorary Agents throughout the kingdom; and at the Office of the Society, Hibernia Chambers, London Bridge, S.E.

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